JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDIES
IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

HERBERT B. ADAMS, Editor

History is past Politics and Politics present History — *Freeman*

EIGHTH SERIES

VII-VIII-IX

NOTES ON THE PROGRESS
OF THE
COLORED PEOPLE OF MARYLAND
SINCE THE WAR.

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE NEGRO IN MARYLAND: A STUDY OF THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY.

BY JEFFREY R. BRACKETT, PH. D.

BALTIMORE
PUBLICATION AGENCY OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
July, August, September, 1890

COPYRIGHT, 1890, BY N. MURRAY.

JOHN MURPHY & CO., PRINTERS.

BALTIMORE.

NOTES ON THE PROGRESS OF THE COLORED PEOPLE OF MARYLAND SINCE THE WAR.[1]

Much has been said and written of what is called the negro problem of the South. The subject has been carried, wisely or unwisely, into the halls of congress, and some precious hours have been spent over it, without result. The writer of these notes is well aware that he will be told that a residence of a few years in Maryland will not allow him to speak with authority on the problem, as an old resident of the "black belt" of Virginia or Carolina might speak. To this he would answer only, that he does not presume to enter the lists, to champion any theory or radical solution of the mooted problem, but would aim simply to trace the outlines of the recent progress of the colored people in the community about him. If the study of history, like charity, begins at home, a few facts, though forming only a petty chapter of historical development, may be worth more than much hearsay evidence, newspaper clipping, or speculation on what ought to be. It may chance that the few facts of this petty chapter may give a clue to the yet unwritten ending of the great book of "reconstruction" between the white and colored peoples.

---

[1] NOTE.—The writer will be very thankful for any corrections, or additions to these notes. 106 North Avenue, Baltimore, Md. April, 1890.

In some respects, Maryland is a most interesting and instructive field for a study of the progress of the colored people. A very intelligent colored man has said that his people there would have been much further advanced, had the State seceded and shared the fate of the more Southern states. However this may be—and, indeed, the colored men of Maryland have been little heard of in politics or in the press—the fact that in Maryland the extreme radical rule of reconstruction days was not known, will prove of great significance. The paths of both the white and colored people, there, lay very differently from those in the states further South. We must cast a few quick glances to the far end of both those paths; for distance tends to make murky many things which must not be forgotten.

Maryland did not secede—but what would have been done, had the federal troops not early arrived, and had public sentiment been left entirely to itself, is not so easy to say. The vote of the State in the presidential election of 1860, was almost divided between the Bell and Everett ticket and the Breckenridge and Lane, in favor of the latter. Douglass polled some 5,500 votes, and Lincoln only some 2,000. Without presuming to enter into the history of those troublous times, suffice it to say that the Union party,[1] backed by the federal government, held control of the State until 1867, when—with the safety of the Union ensured, with the more lenient use of the "iron-clad" test oaths, and with the growing division in the old Union party over the plans of reconstruction—the conservative, or democratic, party quietly took possession.

In 1860, there were 87,000 slaves in Maryland, and almost as many free blacks. The losses from, and the excitement over, the escape of slaves from a border state, had been con-

---

[1] When the Union party is spoken of, reference is made to the supporters of the government during the war, not to the Bell and Everett party, which died in 1860.

siderable; and the large number of free blacks—larger than that of any other state—had for years been a source of grievance to the slave-holders of the lower counties. To the Union or war party, slavery was a very delicate question. For instance, Mr. Lincoln's post-master in one of the most important places in the State, was a slave-holder. Governor Bradford, the war governor—who had been himself a slave-holder—when assured of the unjust imprisonment of a free black, sentenced before the war for having in his cabin a copy of Uncle Tom's Cabin, felt justified in giving only a pardon conditioned on emigration, so strong was public opinion. The assembly of 1861–2, while severe in its blame of "the seditious and unlawful acts" of the states in rebellion, yet dreaded as "unwise and mischievous" any interference by the government with the institution of slavery in the South. The preservation of the Union was one thing, the abolition of slavery, even, was another.

Slavery in Maryland was not touched by Mr. Lincoln's emancipation proclamation. In 1864, a convention was held, to form a new State constitution, to supplant that of 1851. A considerable majority of delegates were firmly resolved on abolition. The question was discussed, at length and warmly, pro and con. The old Bible arguments were brought up. The economic condition of the white counties was compared favorably to that of the black—for the Western counties, like those of Virginia, had very few slaves. Stress was laid on the encouragement that would be given the Union cause by the breaking of the most powerful link that had held Southern Maryland largely to confederate interests. Some delegates looked on slavery as already dead; others feared the result of immediate and unconditional emancipation; others branded the old institution as immoral and accursed. Finally, a clause for immediate abolition, unconditioned, was put in the declaration of rights, by a vote of two to one. Then the constitution went before the people. In addition to abolition, it provided, for use in all elections, the strictest test oaths against any sym-

pathy with the Southern cause, and called for true allegiance, not only to the United States Constitution, but to the United States government. In the election of 1860, over 90,000 ballots had been cast; the whole vote on this constitution was 60,000. It was defeated at the polls by 2,000 votes, and was saved only by a majority of 375, counting in the vote of the soldiers from Maryland in the Union camps, which was taken under a provision of the constitution itself. Only those voted at the polls who stood the "iron-clad" test oath.[1]

During these years of state control by the Union party, very few changes were made in the "black" laws in the code. The immigration of free blacks into Maryland was still forbidden until 1865, though, in 1862, the penalty on the black who could not pay the fine inflicted for immigration, was changed from sale as a slave to any highest bidder to sale for not over two years in the State. In 1862, the punishment of blacks for crimes not capital, was so changed that slaves could be imprisoned instead of sold or whipped, and that free blacks could be whipped or imprisoned instead of sold. And the governor was also authorized, if he saw fit, to commute any sentences already given of sale without the State, to the punishment of the new law, which left the place of sale, in all cases, to the discretion of the court. All free black convicts, on release from the penitentiary, were still banished from the State, under penalty of sale for a term as long as they had been imprisoned. It is interesting to note that, in the constitutional convention of 1864, a motion to provide for the liberation of all persons imprisoned under laws arising exclusively from the institution of slavery, was lost by a tie vote. Indeed, the majority of the convention, while firm for abolition, saw plainly that public sentiment, even of the

---

[1] The soldier vote was 2,633 for, and 263 against, the adoption of the constitution. State compensation to slave-holders was voted down in the convention by 38 to 13. It was hoped for some time that the federal government would do something in the way of recompense for abolition.

Union supporters, was hardly keeping pace with them. The committee on education, so it was plainly stated, had not prepared any provision for a system of education for the colored population, believing that the people were not yet ready for such a step.[1] The assembly of 1865 wiped away much of the useless slave code, including certain restrictions on the free blacks which had been incident, largely, to the presence of slavery,—such as the need of a permit to keep a gun, or to purchase powder and shot, or to sell bacon, corn, tobacco, &c., the regulation of public meetings, and the prohibition to navigate a vessel. Most of all, the law against immigration of free blacks was repealed.

By 1866, the position of parties was changing. The issue of union or disunion was a thing of the past. The radical wing of the old Union party became a minority, as the republican party of Maryland; while the conservatives and all those who again became voters, on a lenient use of the old war test oaths, with those who came from the South, took control of the State. In the presidential election of 1868, some 93,000 votes were polled, of which over two-thirds were for Seymour and Blair.

We shall look with interest to see what was then the attitude to the freedmen of the great majority of the white people of Maryland, those who, since 1866, have controlled the State, through the democratic party. The assembly which met early in 1867, repealed, together with some old parts of the code, the act of 1862 on crimes, which provided for the blacks punishments different from those given whites. While other portions of the code—obsolete from the fall of slavery—were wiped away, at the recommendation of the house committee on judiciary procedure, there was removed entirely

---

[1] The following assembly, as we shall see, in an elaborate act for a public school system, offering a free education to all "white" youth, provided that the amount of school taxes paid by colored people should be used for colored schools.

the prohibition of marriage between a negro and a white, though there was left the old penalty of a hundred dollars from any clergyman who should marry such. Marriages previously made between colored persons were declared valid, if established by sufficient proof before a magistrate, and for the future the usual forms of marriage were prescribed for colored persons. There was left, also, the punishment for spreading incendiary matter among the colored population. An attempt was made to change the bastardy law so as to make a white and black father equally responsible before the law, and to make a colored woman a competent witness against a white father, but it received few votes. The assembly of 1864 had modified the law of evidence, but had left unchanged the old provision that the testimony of a colored person would not be received in a case in which a white person was concerned. Now, too, the judiciary committee reported unfavorably on any change in this, and the house of delegates sustained them by a vote of 36 to 15.

Shortly after this session of assembly, a new convention met at Annapolis, to frame another state constitution. No one could deny that it was an able body, representative of the majority of voters. The constitution, which was adopted by a popular vote of some 47,000 to 23,000, did not declare as did that of 1864, that all men were "created equally free"; nor did it, in declaring the Constitution, and laws of the United States in pursuance thereof, the supreme law of the land, call for oaths of allegiance to the federal "government." Slavery was not to be reëstablished, but, as it had been abolished in accord with federal policy, compensation from the United States, in return, was due those who had suffered. The constitution, as a whole, was a reaction from its predecessor. When being considered in convention, a motion to add, that no person should be incompetent as a witness on account of race or color unless thereafter so declared by act of assembly, was carried by a vote of 60 to 41. Thus this radical discrimination was done away—for, though the convention refused by

a large majority to strike out the proviso in the clause, there is little possibility of any legislative action thereon.

Thus some important steps were taken, but not enough to reach the point, to which a member of the house judiciary committee of 1867 urged his fellow delegates, where all laws contrary to the changed conditions of things should be done away, and the same justice meted out to each and all. There still remained considerable discrimination in the law. Thenceforth, there was little action touching the colored people, in the halls of assembly at Annapolis.

Meanwhile the proposed fourteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States, had gone before the country. The joint committee on federal relations of the assembly of 1867 reported that the measure, as coming from a congress from which the members from eleven states were forcibly and illegally excluded, was not proposed in a constitutional manner, and so should not be ratified. Besides this, they stated, Maryland could not be expected to throw away any claim for recompense for liberated slaves, nor to agree to a plan to force the Southern states to give the suffrage to the colored people or else to lose a large part of their representation.[1] This was the pith, only, of the report of the committee, for it went at length, to justify its actions, into a discussion of the constitutional questions of the past years. Rawle on the Constitution was quoted, and the under-tone of the report was an arraignment, in plain but measured words, of the party which had directed the government since 1860. Following the fourteenth amendment, came the introduction of the colored men to politics, and the fifteenth amendment. The idea was current, that suffrage was to be extended not from the fitness of the blacks to wield it at once, but in order to perpetuate the rule of the republican party,—an act of political prejudice rather than of statesmanlike wisdom. Some thought it a measure merely to punish the Southern people for not having thrown

---

[1] House Journal and Doc., 1867, M. M.

aside at once the feelings which would naturally survive a lost cause, lost property and an upheaval of society. Whether these ideas were right or wrong need not here be discussed, for their influence on public opinion was equally potent. The assembly of 1870, like its predecessor, was wholly conservative, and its action may be anticipated. When the ratification of the fifteenth amendment was brought up in the house, the seventy-five members voting said—no. When a bill for the incorporation of Chestertown, allowing white voters only, which had already passed the assembly, was soon after vetoed by Gov. Bowie, in respect to the fifteenth amendment—which had since become the supreme law of the land—no fewer than sixteen members of the house indulged in a vain effort to pass the bill over the veto.

It is impossible to tell to-day, in how far this public sentiment of the representative party of Maryland was the result of the attitude of the republican party in the State. But that public sentiment cannot be too carefully weighed before proceeding to a study in detail of the progress of the colored people. Laws without public sentiment to enforce them, in spirit as in letter, are of doubtful worth in a community. In this case, public feeling was not merely indifferent, it was hostile, to the effort to legislate civil and political equality into the recently emancipated race.

The radical wing of the unconditional Union party, in convention in Baltimore, in 1866, pledged itself to the maintenance of the constitution of 1864, "which expressly and emphatically prohibits both rebel suffrage and negro suffrage." The question of negro suffrage, resolved the convention, is not an issue in Maryland, but is raised by the enemies of the Union party, for the purpose of dividing and distracting it. A leading article in the Baltimore republican organ called this matter of negro suffrage "The conservative Bugaboo."[1]

---

[1] See Baltimore *American* for June 5-6, Aug., 1866.

In striking contrast with this, was the republican state convention held in the following year—one year before the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution, and nearly three years before the fifteenth amendment, became the law of the land, but while the conservative party, now in majority, was framing a new state constitution. This convention truly marked, as its organ, the *American* said, "a new era in the political history of Maryland." Of the 200 delegates from Baltimore city, sixty-eight were colored men, and there were as many more colored men from the counties. The delegations varied, some six counties sending all whites, apparently. Proceedings began with prayer by a colored clergyman. The presiding officer, a prominent republican, afterwards high in office at Washington, called for the passage of the Sumner bill, and desired the people to understand, and especially the colored people, whose battles they had been fighting, that remembrance and appreciation of the past should be shown by conduct at the ballot-box. In reply, a colored veteran said there was no need to tell his people how to vote. "We have not," he said, "the ability among us to occupy high positions of honor, we are like a new-born babe, taking our first steps to political life and strength, supported by the radical party." Another prominent leader said, "it is because we are a minority of the voting population of Maryland that the necessity has forced upon us of casting around to see by what means we can extricate ourselves from our present position;" and another still, "whenever we can get the suffrage of the colored man, I am satisfied there is no man that can ever betray us again." The resolutions of the convention called for the equality of all American citizens in all civil and political rights, and urged the republican party, as a last resort, should the coming conservative constitution not give impartial suffrage, to appeal to congress for support. One colored delegate, a member of the committee on resolutions, rejoiced to see a day of real political equality between whites and blacks; another said that he was ready, like Simeon

of old, to depart in peace, now that he had seen salvation. The republican state central committee was increased by five from Baltimore and two from each county, in order to have colored men on it; and the convention closed with prayer by a colored clergyman.[1]

All efforts of the republicans were futile, however, to prevent the adoption of the conservative constitution, a few months later. The following Spring, of 1868, saw a division in the party ranks, over the wisdom of urging in every way, as a national policy, the extension of the suffrage. This question was then threatening to wreck republican supremacy in several large Northern states. The Maryland convention declared itself firm in devotion to justice and impartiality of the suffrage, but voted that their delegates to Chicago should not recommend it as a plank in the party platform. This convention apparently had few, if any colored members. A bolters' convention met soon after, about a half of the delegates being colored; but a number of counties were not represented. The president said, we intend to make the negro an active member, in politics, not to insult him by making him a consulting member. The other wing of the party, said one colored man, would go for negro suffrage, if convenient. The committee on resolutions, as announced, was of whites, but two colored men were added, by special resolution, and several colored men were put on the Chicago delegation, one as a delegate, the others as alternates. This split in the ranks was afterwards closed, and before the suffrage was given the blacks by the fifteenth amendment, March, 1870, some white and colored republicans had joined in a grand ratification meeting, for the consolidation of the party throughout the State. The meeting was held in a hall owned by a colored association, and was presided over by the chairman of the colored republican state central committee. Thanks were given the republican state committee for taking in a fair

---

[1] May 15, 1867.

representation of the colored voters, as had been requested. The party, said a white leader, has done all it could, here, for the colored people, and this meeting shows that people united, with trifling differences banished.[1]

The votes of colored men were received in Maryland, for the first time since 1810,[2] in several local elections in the Spring of 1870. The first general election was for congressmen, in the Fall. Meantime, the colored people seem to have been interested and active in the exercise of citizenship. In the Fall previous, a large celebration and procession had been held by them, in honor of emancipation. Soon, a young mens' convention was held,—not as large as had been desired, but of some forty delegates,—to further associations throughout the State, for social, moral and political advancement; and fidelity was pledged to the republican party. This interest was not in Baltimore alone—it is said that in one of the county towns, where an old law limited voters of the corporation to real estate owners, a sharp colored citizen recorded the sale of forty-four square inches of land to as many colored men.

It is interesting to note that shortly before the congressional election, the chairman of both the republican and democratic state committees joined in asking the judges of election in Baltimore, that fences might be erected in front of the polling windows, and that the colored voters should approach on one side, the whites on the other, exclusively. This, they said, would conduce to a quiet and honest election. The republican chairman soon withdrew his name, after finding, as he stated, that the plan was opposed by the United States marshal, as drawing a race or color line. There was opposition to it among the judges, also; for as votes were to be taken alternately, and the white voters were many more than the colored, unfairness might result to the whites, especially were the polls crowded

---

[1] March, May, 1868; Jan. 13, 1870.
[2] See *The Negro in Maryland*, p. 186.

at the last minutes. The election finally passed off with unusual quiet and good order in Baltimore. The marshal had given notice that no illegal discrimination of voters would be allowed, and his deputies and the police watched the polls without difficulty. The day after, the *American*, the republican organ, said that the fact stood out patent to all that the republican party, even with the addition of the colored vote, was in a minority in the State; that the democrats had carried every county save one, and there the republican leaders had made untiring efforts. The official vote showed, later, that three of the Southern, old slave-holding, tobacco growing counties, beside, had gone republican by very few votes. In 1868, Grant had polled over 38,000 votes, and Seymour over 62,000. Now, the republicans had thrown nearly 58,000, but the democrats nearly 77,000. One Southern county that had given thirty-five votes for Grant now gave nearly 1,600 republican votes; another, over 1,400 in place of thirty-eight; but everywhere the democratic vote was increased, and the majority was 19,000. A leading editorial of the *American* said that no true republican should be disheartened, for the cause of equal rights to all men was just. "The prejudice," it added, "which is entertained against the voting of the colored people contributed more to our defeat than all other causes combined. The negro has proven to be an element of weakness and not of strength, and it will take time to educate the masses up to an appreciation of the justice of his enfranchisement."[1]

In politics there are so many movements whose causes and effects are hard to estimate rightly, so many ways that are dark and tricks that are far from vain, that it will not be wise for the layman to attempt more than a notice of the most significant features in the history of the colored men in politics in Maryland, in the past twenty years. First of all,

---

[1] Nov. 4–10, 1870. The U. S. marshals then had certain special powers of oversight of elections, by federal law.

we find a strong feeling among the colored people that they have not been sufficiently recognized in politics. There is little similarity, indeed, between the later republican conventions and that first one in 1867 which, as the *American* said, gave promise of a new era to the freedmen. Representation in the party councils was rather the answer to request than a ready proffer. Three years after enfranchisement, the republican state central committee was three-quarters white, only two of the twenty members from Baltimore city being colored; at present, there are a half dozen colored men on the state committee of 117 members, while of the city executive committee of twenty-four, three are colored. Twice at least, one of the sixteen delegates to the national conventions has been a colored man. Of positions in the federal offices in Maryland, from thirty to forty have been held by colored men, a few as inspectors and storekeepers, most as messengers. Two prominent politicians have been special agents in the postal service. If reports be true, there are fewer colored men in the offices here to-day, than there were years ago.[1] At present, the colored voters are a quarter of all on the registers' lists, and a very large part of the republican party.

This has not gone on without complaint and warning from colored leaders. As early as 1869, a delegation called on the newly appointed collector of the port, with the hope that the race would be recognized properly, that the principles of republicanism, so we read, might be no longer a parade of words but of deeds. The chief object of the colored state committee, which lasted for a time, was advancement in political influence. In 1870, this committee asked chiefs of departments in the federal buildings to appoint colored men, in keeping with the progress of the republican party. Not one influential posi-

---

[1] This may have been affected by civil-service rules. It is interesting to note that in the custom house, under the recent democratic administration, a colored democrat was made a messenger, while two colored republican messengers were retained.

tion, they said, had as yet been given; and they urged some action even as a wise policy, to keep down suspicions of selfishness. They were opposed to the dissolution of the colored committee until they were taken into full political fellowship in the party. As to forming a wing of the republican party by themselves, a black man's party, there has been always a difference of opinion or action among the colored leaders, but the regulars have succeeded in beating the disaffected. Thus, in 1873, a public meeting was held in favor of a separate organization; but a committee of fifty soon called a counter meeting, a band and two political clubs paraded, the meeting was so large that addresses were made without as well as within the halls, prominent leaders said that all men can't have offices, that all colored men were not good men, that thirty-four colored men were then drawing pay at the custom-house, that all this talk of setting themselves up at once, in a hurry, in politics was injuring their cause—and the meeting adopted resolutions of support to the republican principles and party. In 1879, a meeting of colored republicans, attended not largely but by some well known men, declared that the political recognition of their people was annually growing less, that they had allowed themselves to be "pack-mules, sumpters and dromedaries" to the party, and, while forming two-thirds of it, had become mere ciphers. The democrats, they said, give equality of rights to Germans and Irish, and we shall demand the same from republicans. Fidelity was pledged to the republican cause, but measures were urged in order to secure justice.[1]

Some of these movements resulted in securing greater recognition in party work. Thus, in the Fall campaign of '79, delegations of colored men waited on the state executive committee—for some hours, if reports be true—with the request that some of their fellows be put on the campaign committee; and were finally assured that one would be appointed.

---

[1] Nov. 12, 1879.

Since then, several have been put on the city executive committee. But the leaders as a body grew discouraged at the attitude of the white politicians of the State in the dispensation of patronage. In the Spring of 1881, at the beginning of a new national administration, a convention of colored republicans of the State was held in Baltimore, for the purpose of securing more liberal recognition. There were five delegates from each city ward, and a number from eleven of the counties. A caucus held two days before, had decided to ask President Garfield to appoint two colored men to any two of the thirteen first-class government offices in Baltimore, and to secure a fair representation in the subordinate offices. The convention was not altogether a happy family, a minority desiring to ask the removal from office of all white republicans who actually disregarded the colored men. It was stated that out of $900,000 given in salaries in the State, they got only $13,000; that one high federal officer in Baltimore did not think that colored men had any rights which need be respected, and that another had refused to employ colored men in taking the census. But the majority secured moderate and respectful resolutions, declaring renewed fealty to the old party, and thanking the President for the good words in his inaugural address, but declaring that the distribution of patronage was not in accord with the principles of the party, and that the colored vote was entitled by virtue of numbers and services to a fairer division of it. Shortly after the convention, a committee appointed by it presented to the President an address, of few words and in good taste. After calling attention to the fact that out of 1,300 federal offices in Maryland, only thirty were held by colored men, the chairman said: "We do not censure all; but there are departments of the federal service in our State where colored men are excluded solely on the ground of color, and to our personal knowledge the same positions are filled by colored men both North and South acceptable to all classes of citizens, with honor to their race, and to the interest of the public service." The President

answered that he had no sympathy with the exclusion of men from office on account of color, that qualification should be the test, and promised to examine the papers handed him. There the matter ended.[1]

As to elective offices in the State, colored men have seldom been nominated to them, and nomination, as a rule, has led to defeat. Thus, in 1872, a colored man offered himself as a candidate for congress in the fifth district, which was made up mostly of the "black belt" of Maryland. A circular in his favor demanded one representative for the 40,000 colored votes of the State, and was endorsed by a number of prominent colored men, many of whom were not residents of Maryland. The candidate soon withdrew, however, and a white republican was elected by a majority of over 1,000 votes over his democratic rival. In the local election in Baltimore, in 1885, when the democrats were opposed by a fusion of republicans and independent democrats, two colored republicans ran for the city council in a ward which had over 900 colored voters; but received fifty-seven votes only. In 1886, a well known and well educated colored man was nominated for congress from Baltimore by a meeting of some sixty delegates from the various wards; and he soon after opened his campaign by addressing a meeting of hundreds of his fellow citizens. There were four other candidates in the field, a regular democrat, an independent democrat or fusionist, a white bolter from the republicans, and a prohibitionist. The total vote was over 25,000; of which the democrat got over 14,000, the fusionist over 7,000, the white bolter and prohibitionist over 1,600 each, and the colored republican just twenty-five. In 1888, the colored paper in Baltimore, calling attention to the fact that Annapolis and Cambridge had had a few colored men in their city government, urged the voters in two wards, having large black population, to put forward two representative men for councilmen; but nothing was done.

---

[1] March 22, 24, April 2, 1881.

It must be freely stated, in weighing the complaint of the colored leaders, that those very leaders have done much to bring about the comparative failure of the colored people in public life, thus far. It is not surprising that the colored politicians, in Maryland, during the past twenty years, should get the idea that politics exist for private and not for public good. The air has been full of the disease, and it is catching. There are of course many colored men interested and active in politics who are honest and fearless, but the reports that are current among the colored people, and the utterances of some of their best men, notably clergymen, are enough to cause them to look with distrust on those, as a body, who are known as politicians. One of the colored men mentioned in the paragraph above is said to have received a large sum of money for standing as a candidate, in order to divide the republican vote. In 1870, as there was much "crimination and recrimination" between certain colored republicans, which was injuring the united action of the party, the colored state committee asked the aspirants for leadership to settle their personal differences between themselves, ending with the threat that, "In the words of the immortal Andrew Jackson, 'by the Eternal,' we, the colored workingmen, will stump this State in our own interest, if these aspirants do not seal their pledge of consolidation by stopping their recriminations!"

Part of the complaint against the white politicians has been wholly selfish, from those who are outside the public crib and who want to get in. In 1874, a small meeting was held, for association to secure for the colored men a fairer share of political reward. Complaint was made that certain "rings" had controlled matters to their own interest, and the people were called on to strip the false plumes from those men who strut about boasting that they carry this or that ward in their breeches pocket! A few days after, a card appeared in the paper from a prominent politician, stating that twenty-seven

of the thirty-two persons at this meeting were disappointed applicants for offices, who would be thankful for anything, and some of whom had recently been the hired servants of the democrats! Such facts as these show one good reason why many movements for the benefit of their race have been hindered, if not prevented, by a lack of unity, of confidence, among colored men. "There has been a class of negro leaders in Baltimore," says a prominent colored pastor, "who have time and time again sold out the interests of their people for whatever sum they could get." "Politicians," said a leading colored lawyer, in an address to a large gathering of his race, "have betrayed the people and bartered away our birthright and lawful heritages."

For years the colored men voted almost without exception for the republican party. Occasionally, some of them did not vote at all, when the henchmen of the democratic bosses, as notably in 1875, played with them what have been called the "playful freaks of freemen's spirits"—which, being interpreted, means bullets and black eyes. Omissions or discrepancies on the registration books or poll lists have also thrown out many a colored vote. In 1879, a large meeting of colored men claimed that several thousand of their people had been wrongly turned away from the polls by false registration. Of late years, money has been found by the democrats to be a more judicious means of influence than violence. In 1872, one or two colored leaders followed Mr. Sumner, and finally landed in the democratic ranks. One of these was given a position as messenger in the custom-house under the recent democratic administration. A few colored men, notably several prominent clergymen, joined the prohibition party in 1886, mostly from zeal for the cause of temperance, but partly from weariness in waiting for the republicans to support their people in their efforts for the abolition of the "black laws" and for other advantages. The leaders of the prohibition party, then, though with some fear and trembling

evidently, openly advocated these measures in their platform. But the prohibition vote has been very small.[1]

During the last few years, two movements are noticeable among the colored men, one toward indifference to politics and party ends, the other towards independent action, in local elections especially. As to how many colored men have voted the democratic ticket, and as to their reasons for so doing, opinions differ widely. In 1885, in Baltimore, the colored paper which had supported the democratic nominee for mayor, claimed that several thousand votes of the democratic majority had been cast by colored men. On the other hand, an old white republican worker will say that colored democrats are very few, and that most of those are willing to be bought, or wish for some bad reason to keep on the right side of the police. While an equally experienced colored republican estimates the colored democratic vote in 1886, at a thousand. There are some colored men ready to be bought, there are some who vote the democratic ticket because their employers do; but it is also beyond doubt that there is a growing number who will vote in local elections for a man who, democrat or not, has shown an interest in the colored people and a willingness to help them to greater opportunities. The portrait of one ex-mayor of Baltimore, a democrat of democrats, but who bettered the public schools for colored children, hangs in the hall of one of the largest colored societies; and it seems to be agreed by good judges among the colored men that, had he been again a candidate, he would have polled a very large colored vote. In the counties, also, on both the Eastern and Western shores, there have been instances, recently, where colored men refused to follow the old party whips, in sufficient numbers to prevent the election of the republican candidates.

No positions under the city government, which has been democratic for years, have been given to colored men. The

---

[1] In 1886, it was 7,239 out of some 150,000. The next year, it was 4,414, of 190,000.

colored paper which had worked for the democrats, in 1886, remarked, on finding that the 350 nominations sent in by the new mayor were all whites, that surely one colored man could have been found fit to be at least a lamp-lighter. In matters pertaining to politics, the colored people do not expect consideration from the democratic managers.[1]

The facts that politics have done the colored people more harm than good, and that parties seem to care for them as voters only, are making the intelligent more and more independent of party. With the spread of education and experience, this spirit will grow. Prominent colored men, some who have long been in politics, as well as clergymen, are welcoming it. The day is past, said one clergyman, when my people will jump the fence like a flock of sheep; it would be well if no one knew how they would vote. The black-bird, said another, is no longer to be caught by a little salt sprinkled on its tail. The old state of things cannot last, says a prominent colored lawyer; our universities and colleges are annually sending into the world young colored men "who have declared their emancipation from political serfdom." "There is no more reason," continued the same writer, "for the colored race being a political unit than a religious unit. I hope to see the day when he may feel at home in any political party, when all parties will treat him right and no party oppress him. . . . But the colored man had better drop practical politics for the present, for he gains neither honor nor emoluments. He is wasting time and energy, which, if expended in other directions, would bring education, property, wealth, business and professional success, and these alone can give the race strength and character." The fact is, writes the editor of one of the

---

[1] One colored man is a bailiff in the city courts; but he was appointed after the reform judge movement in which many republicans and democrats joined. The colored man appointed in the custom-house under Cleveland is, to use his own words, a "particular friend" of an influential party manager.

colored religious papers, the time has come for colored citizens in the South to give more time to cultivating the soil, and to commercial pursuits, and less time to politics. We do not advise them to do less voting, but they should use more care in speech-making, and change their policy of voting, when they can do so to advantage at local elections. And the present colored daily paper, after stating, recently, a report that some republican politicians were trying to prevent the appointment to a modest office of an old colored republican leader, and that the republican congressmen were working for certain white men for the place, says: "To sum up the whole matter, it would yield far more to colored men to pay less attention to partisan politics, and look out for the substantial and permanent improvement of their material condition." The speakers in these cases are but a few individuals among a large people, it is true; but the significant point is that they are of the best educated and most progressive.[1]

During these years of political experience, since the franchise was suddenly given to the untaught freedman, the colored people of Maryland have been quietly doing much in laying a foundation, surer than politics, for future progress and influence.

In 1880, the whites in Maryland numbered nearly 725,000; the blacks over 210,000. During twenty years, the former had increased by considerably over 200,000, the latter by some 40,000. For some years after emancipation there was a marked movement of blacks from the counties to Baltimore and the larger towns. This has been less of late years, but the city, with its large colored population, prosperous colored churches and societies, attractive social life, and the demand for service, has grown in its colored population far out of

[1] The writer doubts if any facts of value as to the colored vote can be deduced from mere registration reports—especially before the appearance of the census of 1890. The Baltimore *Sun* Almanacs contain very full registration and election reports.

proportion to the increase in the counties. There has also been some movement north from Virginia. There were in Baltimore, in 1860, nearly 28,000 blacks, of whom only some 2,000 were slaves. Within a decade, 12,000 were added; in the next decade, 14,000 again. Since 1880, it is estimated that the increase has been some 25,000, making a total colored population in the city of about 77,000. It is not likely that so many colored people will be found, throughout the length of the land, dwelling within such narrow bounds—save in Washington, perhaps, where a study of their progress would not be equally instructive, as the District of Columbia has a peculiarly cosmopolitan society, and is under the control of congress.[1]

The word "blacks" is often used for brevity's sake, nor is the term usually misleading, for a man of fair skin, be it so only that African blood can be at all recognized, is placed by the great majority of whites on the same side of the color line with the darkest of the black. To most of the whites, that ominous line is single and straight. Properly speaking, however, the greater part of the colored people of Maryland are rather fair than dark. Some of them have blood in their veins of which they can think only with mingled feelings of pride and grief.

In most of the larger communities there are certain families who have long been better off and better educated than the rest of their fellows; there are some who have been better known to, and had more to do with, the whites; and there are everywhere the differences in social life and mental attainments which mark any people; but we do not find any extensive and sharply defined feeling of caste among the colored

---

[1] In 1880, there were over 59,000 blacks in the District. In the city and neighborhood of Charleston, South Carolina, there is a large colored population, exceeding the whites, and a study of their progress would be invaluable. New Orleans, Richmond, and Memphis, Tenn., would also be interesting fields.

people here.[1] The exceptions are probably the result of social rather than caste feeling, as when a few colored persons objected, at first, to sending their children to the colored public schools. There have been a few cases in which persons very fair have been deemed whites, and so have associated with whites, but they could not then associate with their relatives of colored blood. To hide the drop of African blood is not, probably, in these few cases, to desire to be a snob to one's relatives, but to get the advantages in the community which all respectable whites, but no colored man, can have.

One of the most prominent and experienced colored clergymen of Maryland, whose duties have taken him over the whole State for many years, recently said, when asked if his people had made much progress:—they have made the progress of fifty years in twenty-five. From all parts, indeed, come reports of what individuals have done. For instance, a very intelligent colored school teacher writes from the Eastern Shore that nowhere are the colored people more prosperous and successful than there; and, he adds, they seem to be equally happy and contented. He estimates that nearly two-thirds of them own good land, some as much as one to two hundred acres, and thinks them increasing in importance and respectability as they become real estate owners. In one of the county towns half the population is colored, and these compare favorably, in proportion, with the blacks of Baltimore in intelligence and business enterprise. One man owns a score of houses, and is said to have $50,000 in cash; one of the best, if not the best, of the jewelry stores belongs to another; a third has the best trade in beef, in the town. When one colored citizen, well known and highly respected, lost money by an unfortunate investment, and was threatened with the loss of his hotel, several wealthy white fellow-citizens came to his rescue, saying, "it will never do for Bill —— to fail!"

---

[1] As in Charleston, So. Car., for instance.

On every hand are the marks of progress, says this writer, remarkable when considering the position of the blacks twenty-five years ago. So, on the Western Shore and throughout the State there are noteworthy examples of what industrious and intelligent colored men can do and are doing. In no case, it is believed, will such men meet with anything but sympathy and encouragement in their material progress from the good white citizens about them.[1]

It is a pity that there are no data for a reasonably accurate estimate of the increase in wealth of the colored people of Baltimore. A clergyman of long experience in the State, made careful inquiry, and estimated the wealth of the colored people of the State in 1885, to be about $2,250,000, exclusive of houses, furniture and the property of societies. One of the most prominent colored editors of Baltimore, who has considered the matter, reports that the present aggregate wealth of his people in the city is from three to four millions. And he cited twenty individuals who represent, probably, a half million. One was thought to be worth $75,000; another, $60,000; another, $50,000; three others, $30,000 each; four, again, $25,000 each; and the others varying from $15,000 to $8,000. Many more might have been named, and the figures given were below what common report frequently gave. The biography of some of these men would be more interesting than instructive here, for no rational being can question the energy and capacity which many individual colored men have shown. The best known caterers of Baltimore are colored,

---

[1] One colored dealer and shipper of produce, in an eastern county, is said to have netted $1,600, on strawberries alone, in one year. Others have extensive canning houses. There are several coasting and oyster vessels on the Bay owned by colored men.

It is interesting to note that a delegation of some forty colored oystermen of Southern Maryland have taken steps to make claims against the government for their boats, which were destroyed by the government during the search for Wilkes Booth, in 1865, and which they estimate as representing a capital of $10,000.

and there are several provision and produce stores, well patronized by whites. The greater number of stores, however, are small, and deal mostly with the colored people and the poorer whites. In these are sold china and glass-ware, groceries, produce, oysters, "notions," &c., as the case may be. Several colored persons have, for years, had stalls in the markets; one butcher has a slaughter-house and does his own killing. There are several dealers in coal. At least one shoemaker is well known, and has had good patronage for many years. Most of the "jobbing" and independent trucking is by colored men, who own from one to fourteen wagons. There is constant activity in this small express business and in furniture moving: one man, for instance, who began with one wagon, three years ago, has now six "teams"—and has bought three fair houses, besides. The junk business—which, before the war, was the work of Jews—is now mostly done by blacks, though the great majority, probably, have little capital in trade beside a hand-cart or a bag over the shoulder. In such ways as these, by day labor and, to a certain extent, by skilled labor, the colored man who is provident is laying aside money.

It is, unhappily, to a limited extent only that the colored people can work at skilled labor. Before the war, the circumstances in Baltimore were more like those in the more Southern states, to-day. Certain work was done mostly, if not wholly, by blacks. Thus, they made bricks in Summer and "shucked" oysters in Winter; as stevedores, they loaded and unloaded the ships; they had a monopoly of the ship-caulking. Some of the richest colored men in Baltimore began life, in the old days, as caulkers or stevedores. In the counties especially, some of them were made carpenters and blacksmiths. But foreign labor came in, especially after the war. German women could shuck oysters cheaper than colored men; the work of making bricks, of caulking and loading ships, became more and more divided between whites and blacks. Now,

the whites are, with a few exceptions, the skilled workmen, the artisans, of the community.

There are some colored messengers in offices, and there are many porters. Occasionally, the duties of these may become that of a shipping clerk; but it is doubtful if colored clerks can be seen outside of colored stores. There are several colored printers; there are one or two manufacturers of hair work and dressmakers' trimmings, but their work is so small that they teach the trades to a very few only. There are a very few painters and carpenters, but their work has to be mostly jobbing, especially among their own people, for the iron-clad rules of the trade-unions shut out those who, for one reason or another, are not union men. In only such branches as "hod-carrying," brick-making and caulking, do the colored men have influence.

For ten years or more, the hod-carriers' union has been strong and beneficial. Of this work, of handling bricks and mortar, the colored men have here a perfect monopoly. In the rhyme with which all New England boys are so familiar, "Paddy, be quick,—more mortar, more brick!" Sambo would here have to be substituted for Paddy. Begun with some thirty members—on the basis of a smaller union previously disbanded—the union now has eight hundred names on the rolls, most of whom, in times of work, will have paid all dues and therefore be beneficial members and in good standing. A union price for labor is fixed, and membership is refused to those who would work for less; while members will not work with any hod-carriers without the union. The beneficial side, which is as successful as the protective, is managed from monthly dues of fifty cents, and assessments on the death of members. While a member in good standing is ill, he receives $4 a week; should he die, $75 is given as a burial due. $25 is given on the death of a member's wife, and $15 on the death of a child. Recently, $1,500 has been divided as dividends among the members, and some $3,500 cancelled from

back dues, and there is a cash balance in the bank of over $4,000.[1]

The caulkers were all colored until shortly before the war. Then, when the white caulkers grew to be a considerable number, there was trouble between the whites and blacks, resulting in rioting, and the latter were driven off to their own resources. After an interval of many years, they came together in the Knights of Labor, for mutual protection against a reduction in wages by the employers. Soon they drew out, some four years ago, and formed together the caulkers' protective union. This is based on strictly protective principles, all caulkers being of necessity union men, and those coming from elsewhere pay an increased admission due, amounting to $50, if from abroad. The beneficial features are a burial payment of $50, for a member, and of $20 for a member's wife; and $4 a week while ill, if injured in the course of work. The dues, for this, amount to $3 a year. The present membership is somewhat under two hundred.

The history of the brick-makers—workmen in the brick yards—was somewhat like that of the caulkers, in that the majority of them, who were blacks, took measures, soon after the war, to protect themselves against a reduction of wages. Several times, too, efforts were made to keep up a protective union among all the brick-workers. Finally, five years ago, a colored man and one or two white fellow-workmen, lying on the grass in idleness near their old yard, planned the brick-makers' protective union, which has since continued, and has kept reasonable wages. The beneficial dues are $3.00 a year, in return for which, in addition to the mere benefit of membership, a funeral payment of $56 is given, on a member's death. The membership soon grew to be three thousand or more. The oyster "shuckers," to a large extent the same men who made bricks in summer, also several times, and to

---

[1] On a hod-carriers' picnic to Washington, in 1887, some 500 men and 200 women and children turned out.

large numbers also, banded together for protection; but they have not kept up any permament organization. One movement, toward the close of the war, was successful in raising the price of work from a low figure to which it had fallen.

The interesting feature of these protective unions, is the association together, perfectly naturally, of white and black fellow-laborers, for their common good. On the one hand, we find the hod-carriers with a half dozen white members with the colored members, several hundred strong. Of the caulkers, rather more than half are white; of the brick-makers, over two-thirds are white. On the other hand, the three or four colored ship-carpenters in Baltimore belonged for a time to the ship-carpenters' union, and left for no reason touching color or race. The caulkers and brick-makers meet regularly together, as members of the same branches, and the officers may be black or white. If a white president presides, a colored secretary records. And when there have been parades of labor organizations, these bodies in which white and blacks are united, were represented without distinction. Were there enough good colored artisans, as carpenters and painters, &c., to raise the question of their admission into the various trades unions, it is certain that there would be complaint and remonstrance; but were the number of them sufficient to endanger prices, there would probably be unions resulting, for the common good of fellow workmen.

Curious results frequently occur from motives of self-interest and race discrimination. Many colored barbers must turn away colored men from their chairs, for good white custom would otherwise be lost. When a very respectable colored man asked for a glass of lemonade, one hot Summer day, from a little stand in a down-town street, the dark proprietor hesitated; then said, "I know you don't want to injure my business;" and finally flatly refused to sell. In the office of a Baltimore colored newspaper, managed entirely by colored men, several white compositors were recently employed; but these stopped work at once when a colored printer was engaged.

When the Chesapeake Marine Railway was entirely owned and managed by the colored people, some years ago, several white carpenters worked in the yard, drawing their pay from colored hands.

Much has been said in excellent editorials and communications, in the colored papers of Baltimore, to incite the colored people to greater business activity and to earnest efforts to open the higher trades and occupations to their race. The need of manual, industrial training has been felt keenly by some, who see so many of the youth growing up to citizenship on the street corner, under the scant schooling of "odd jobs." So far, the public authorities have not been far-sighted enough to open manual training to the blacks; though the house of refuge for colored boys and the home at Melvale for colored girls—the result very largely of the labor of a few whites friendly to the advance of the freedmen and of society at large—have been good examples. In 1886, a number of well known colored men planned the organization of a mechanical and industrial school for colored boys and girls. A large and representative board of officers was chosen, the school was incorporated in 1887, and meetings were held to arouse general interest. Thirty-six colored clergymen endorsed the work, and an appeal for aid was made to some prominent whites. In response, about $125 was subscribed by a few friendly white citizens, and over $550 by the colored people—mostly in dollar contributions. About $234 was paid in, but popular interest in the work was not sufficient to make it a success—although the plan of the managers was to raise a moderate sum only, two or three thousand dollars, and then to ask for an appropriation from the authorities. The colored papers urged their readers to respond. One suggested the issue of stock in small shares. Another calculated that $10,000 would put the school in operation successfully, and that a goodly sum could be gotten from the State and from friendly citizens, if the colored people raised half or more of the required amount. Is there not enough race pride, race ambition, said

the editor, to bring forward 200 boys to pay a tuition of $10 apiece, to raise contributions of $30 in each of the thirty colored churches, and of $5 in each of the 500 lodges and socials in the city? There was no response; the promoter of the school is a hard-working man, whose life is spent in his shop; and so the little capital is in the bank, and the work has halted where it was. The Centenary Biblical Institute, a school for colored youth, maintained by the Methodist Episcopal conference, has given some industrial training, especially at its branch in Queen Anne's county.

Early in 1888 was incorporated the Maryland Colored Industrial Fair Association, with a board of twelve directors, well known, representative men. The object of the association is explained in the circular which was then issued:—

Dear Sir:—By reference to the inclosed Circular, you will at once see, that it is the object of the MARYLAND COLORED INDUSTRIAL FAIR ASSOCIATION, to put on Exhibition annually, in the month of October, the products of the skill of the Colored people of the State of Maryland. The advantages to be derived by the race are incalculable:

First. By the means, or agency of this exhibition, we shall be able to demonstrate that the Colored citizen is something more than a "hewer of wood and drawer of water," that he has genius and educated talent, the full development of which, only needs the same advantages and encouragement that is accorded to other races.

Second. That to display this talent and bring it forcibly to the attention of the State, it cannot better be done than in an Exhibition, where each article exhibited is the product of his own brain and hand.

Third. That the Annual Display as proposed by the Association will have a tendency to develop the skill and talent of our men, women and children, the effects of which, will not only add to their own prosperity, and enhance their value as citizens, but must add to the general good of society and the State of which we have the honor to be citizens.

The Board of Directors, therefore, requests that you will co-operate with them, in finding out all men, women and children of genius and enterprise in your locality, or elsewhere in the State, to your knowledge, who may be engaged in Farming, Gardening, Manufacturing, Artistic Work of any kind and Mechanism.

As Colored Maryland Cooks have a fame that is world wide, and the cultivation of this talent is beneficial both to employer and employed, as well as to the comfort and economy of our own homes, it is desirable to make an extensive Annual Exhibit in the Household Department.

As soon as you forward the names and Postoffice address, we will put ourselves in communication with the proposed Exhibitor, and arrange all details.

No application for space in the Exhibition can be received after August 1st, 1888. Your prompt action will therefore, be a necessity, which will be thankfully received and reciprocated.

The time for the fair was fixed for the 1st of October; prominent clergymen endorsed the movement; and an address was sent out to the colored citizens of the State, to refute the common impression in the community that the colored race is a consuming and not a producing one, and to show that that race in Maryland "possess in a very large degree all the elements that go to make the citizen useful." Soon, an auxiliary board was formed by many prominent colored women, to promote the fair. Reports came in that much interest was being roused, throughout the State. The fair was accordingly held, very successfully, the first week in October following. The Monumental Assembly hall was filled, and many articles were refused at the last moment, from lack of room. At the formal opening, the first evening, when over a thousand persons were present, complimentary and encouraging remarks were made by Gov. Jackson and Mayor Latrobe. The chief speaker, a rising young lawyer of Baltimore, said: "we propose to show the people of our city, State and country, that we are a producing as well as a consuming class; that the idlers and vagrants among us are but the cast off clothing of the race."

The regular evening attendence on the fair was estimated at 800; the whole was respectable and orderly. On one day there came excursions from out of town, notably from Belair, Annapolis and Washington, including the Capitol City Guards, and numbering altogether some 2,000. To give the exhibit in detail would be impossible; it included, for example, excellent portraits, crayons, fine needle-work, dress-making, upholstery work, shoe-making, a floral display, some agricultural products, and, notably, the work of the kitchen,—breads, cakes, preserves, pickles, wine—for which the colored people of Maryland are famous. From the Cheltenham house of reformation came farm products, shoes, clothing and specimens of penmanship.

The second colored exhibit was held a year later, in connection with the Pimlico exhibition, the management of which facilitated in every way a worthy representation of the work of the colored citizens. The exhibit consisted of some 250 articles, occupying a space over seventy feet long and nine feet wide. Among the articles were a hand-made cabinet, upholstery work, horse-shoes, fancy bricks, paintings, drawings, needle-work,—kitchen-work, &c. The Cheltenham reformatory and the girls' industrial home sent excellent work. The articles from the Maryland schools for blind and deaf mutes, included hand-made mattresses, chair-seats, needle-work, shoes, drawing, penmanship.

Already, between the first and second exhibits, a number of prominent colored business men had formed a permanent organization, the "Colored Business Men's Association of Baltimore," to further the business progress of their people by organization and intelligent discussion. The plan was to open rooms in some central locality, where members of the various trades would meet and report all matters of interest; but as yet no active work has been done.[1]

---

[1] These various movements have been due largely to one man, intelligent and active, who has been for many years a business and political leader.

There are several things which have hindered much, any organized trade or business efforts on the part of the colored people of Baltimore. Indifference and lack of public spirit are very noticeable—but these traits are limited by no sharp race line. The colored people, more than the whites, are jealous of one another. This feature has been often mentioned by their writers, and ascribed by them largely to the influence of slavery. However that may be,—it is important to note the influence of politics in raising jealousy and distrust among the colored leaders. If the white "carpet-bag" leaders of the South were a curse to their associates, surely the system of practical politics, as it has been carried on in Maryland, is a bad school for the colored voters. The ambitious colored leader is very liable to have his movements and motives mistrusted. This mistrust may be right or wrong, in individual cases; but the colored people know well that the ballot-box as a rule is surrounded by those who buy and sell. More potent still than any jealousy and distrust against the political leaders, is the fact that a number of colored men's enterprises have been failures, or, if partially successful, have not fulfilled the reasonable expectations of the people. When one of the wealthiest colored merchants in town was approached, three years ago, by an earnest advocate for a business association, the answer was, that he looked upon any such organization with discredit, that he had been the victim of many swindles and misappropriations; and he censured the management of several corporations in which he had lost nearly a thousand dollars.

Soon after the war there was a brick-makers' strike, and the colored brick-makers, in order to maintain good wages, undertook the control of a brick-yard. All the bricks that they could make were sold, and the effort of the employers to cut wages was frustrated, but the yard had to be given up. Good bricks and good bargains were made, but were not followed up in a business-like way. At about the same time came the great strike against the colored caulkers and "'long-

shoremen," in which a thousand were finally forced from work. Thereupon, by a great effort, $10,000 was raised in ready money, within four months, by the colored people alone. Much of it was the result of small and hard-earned savings. With this partial payment, a ship-yard and marine railway was secured, and several hundred colored caulkers were soon busily at work. Money was made, and the remaining capital, $30,000, was quickly paid, together with one or two dividends. Afterwards, the shipping interests went down, as throughout the land; but many of the older colored men will tell, to-day, of their surprise on finding that the ship-yard, instead of being purchased in fee, had only been leased for twenty years, at the end of which time it passed back to its owner's hands, leaving nothing in their hands. Whether rightly or not, there has been much dissatisfaction, and the ship-yard, the first and greatest enterprise of the colored people here, has probably therefore done more harm than good. Again, the failure of the Freedmen's Bank was a serious blow to the rapidly progressing colored people. For instance, one of the colored building associations lost nearly $1,000 by it; and one individual lost $1,200, the savings from his barber-shop —and, if report be true, lost his health besides by his misfortune. Later still, the management of a piece of property bought by colored subscribers, for some $20,000, for a meeting place for the colored societies, military companies, &c., has been considerably blamed. For one reason or another, the project failed.

It is no wonder, then, that people hesitate to promise support to many applicants,—as, for instance, to the man who tried, a year or two ago, to get up a steamboat and commercial company of colored men, for boats on the Bay. On the other hand, because the colored people have learned a few business lessons by a harsh experience, there is no ground for discouragement.[1] If the lessons be taken aright, the experi-

---

[1] One of the best colored lawyers here, said, in an address to a large meeting of his people, in 1888: "When a new enterprise is proposed among

ence will do more good than harm. And the money which the prosperous ones have been quietly putting into their own business or the old, trusted banks, or into real estate, will not have been unwisely placed.

It has been said that in no city are there so many colored house-holders as in Baltimore. Many of the wealthy colored men have invested largely in houses—in a few cases, a whole row is owned by one man. The extent of the town, the number of alleys, and the great number of small houses, of two stories only, facilitate this—for one must not suppose that the seventy-five houses said to be owned by one colored citizen of Annapolis, for instance, are all expensive buildings or on valuable ground. A few colored men may belong to building or loan associations of whites, but there have been several such associations exclusively of their own people. Thus, some of them without capital were helped to get homes, and some with capital were helped to increase it. One association, begun in 1867, in South Baltimore, handled some $12,000 to $15,000. When this was closed, in six or seven years, another was formed by very much the same management, and so another in 1881, and another in 1886; but these have hardly had as much capital as the first. The membership has never been very large. The par value of a share was $125, the issue of shares was limited to 1,000, and, in the first organization, no member could hold over twenty. On every share taken, the borrower paid a dollar a month, and interest, and the association was closed when each member had received back from the treasury the value of each share he might hold. Another series of associations, organized in East Baltimore in 1868, had about a hundred members and probably facilitated the purchase of forty or fifty houses. In both cases the members have been mostly poor men. These associations

---

colored people, they are prone to call up the ghosts of similar projects, or even entirely different undertakings, which have failed. This is babyish and unworthy of a manly vigor."

are well spoken of, and have no doubt done good; but little has been done in this way by the colored people in proportion to the work among the German residents of Baltimore. One would not compare them, for the opportunities of the latter have been infinitely greater; but the diligence and economy of the Germans, in this and many other ways, may well be offered as a stimulating example. It is said that it was not easy for colored men, until recently, to secure houses in reasonably good localities. A recent mayor of Baltimore has stated—and the statement appeared in print—that in his experience the colored people have proved themselves good tenants.

Intelligent colored men have complained that, setting individuals aside, their people as a whole are poor. A prominent clergyman of Baltimore, who is familiar with the counties, stated in a sermon, the result of a painstaking investigation into the amount of property held by the 210,000 colored people of Maryland in 1885—that all the wealth of any amount was held by less than 2,000 individuals. I presume, he added, there are 205,000 who own nothing. Yet he estimated that the net balance of the earnings by moderate daily wages of those who were able to work, after deducting not only necessary but very unnecessary expenses, should be over $1,000,000 a year. The annual wages should be over $38,000,000. If the necessary expenses are 85 per cent., there would be a balance of nearly $6,000,000. But the unnecessary expenses take nearly all of this—for drinks, $2,000,000; tobacco and snuff, $1,000,000; excursions, picnics, camp-meetings, &c., $245,000; and $1,500,000 for incidentals. This estimate may not be correct, but the figures are interesting, as showing the large amount which an intelligent man of experience thinks is spent by the mass of his people for idle purposes, and which ought to be turned to the benefit of individuals and of the race. That a large part of the colored race live from day to day, without saving, is certainly true. But that they have done so, is surely not very remarkable, considering the few generations that separate the colored blood from

the life of Africa, the total irresponsibility of the life of slavery, the sudden manner of emancipation, and the beguiling influences of social life, which, as we shall see, has been highly developed in the larger communities.

Baltimore is called by the colored people themselves, the grave-yard for colored newspapers. Within the last twenty-three years, there have been over a dozen secular papers, mostly weeklies. None of them have lived long—a few months has been the usual time. The editor of one, writing in 1885, said that nine papers had already died, and that it was said that one could not succeed. The reason for it, he gave, was that the publishers never had much money, without which pluck and brains were of little use; that wealthy colored men did not, as a rule, subscribe or advertise; that the subscribers often delayed to pay, and often did not pay at all. The reason for the failure of all these papers is very obviously the failure of the colored people to be interested enough to take them. The highest number of subscribers for which recent papers have appealed has been 10,000; the highest number reached has not, probably, been half that; yet the colored population of the city alone has been 60,000 to 75,000. As a rule, these papers have been well worthy of patronage. The editorials are often admirable. But the field of such papers is necessarily limited largely to the interests of the colored race, for they cannot compete for general and telegraphic news with the large, well supported city dailies. From week to week, there is often little to record of special note; and in several cases, there has been much repetition of editorials and other matter. Another probable reason for some of the lack of public support, is that editorial jealousy and tendency to personality has occasionally appeared. It is surely not elevating, and, after a time, not interesting, to hear that a contemporary, "a brilliant quill-driver," "takes the cake and several plates of cream" for "downright mendacity, pusillanimity and sublime egotism," nor to hear another fellow editor called a "thin and emaciated wind-shoveler." Again, some of these

papers have been wrecked in politics. One, for instance, spoke bravely for the republican party until within a few days of election, when it announced that, after mature deliberation, it found the prohibition party to be the only one that recognized the negro as a citizen and a man; was sorry it had not changed before; and could not further "stultify" its manhood by supporting the republican candidate. Another paper became practically an out-and-out democratic paper; thus losing, of course, the confidence of the mass of the colored people. According to one very intelligent colored writer, it died "a stench to decent-thinking people."

Some prominent colored men have said much for the establishment and support of good colored papers, as a mark of race power and progress, and as a means of manual and intellectual training for colored youth. Several religious or denominational papers have been for some years successfully published by colored men in Baltimore; but they do not appear often, and are given largely to household reading. In conclusion,—while the colored editors have, as a rule, deserved great credit and greater patronage, it must be remembered that they cannot compete with the white papers in the giving of news. The press of to-day is a great public educator; and it may not be a mark of lack of progress that the colored man prefers to give his pennies, in so far as he will read any paper, for that which the white man next him is reading, which tells best what is going on.[1]

---

[1] A colored paper published, in 1885, a catechism, between the editor and a youth:

Editor.—"What paper publishes our news in full?" *Youth.*—"The Director."

E.—"That's right. By whom is it published?" *Y.*—"By black men."

E.—"Right, my boy. Who set the type?" *Y.*—"Black boys."

E.—"How perfect you are. Who should support it?" *Y.*—"The colored people."

E.—"What does their support guarantee?" *Y.*—"Work for our boys and girls."

The growth in religious work among the colored people of Baltimore has been remarkable, and shows what that people will do in work and give in money, when their interests are aroused. Thus, the African Methodist Episcopal church, with nearly 4,200 full members and some 500 probationers, has nine societies with church property valued at over $200,000. Four of these have over $20,000; one of them, $75,000. Again, the Methodist Episcopal church, with over 6,000 full members and nearly 800 probationers, has eight societies with property worth some $275,000, one society having $68,000 and another $91,000. Many of these societies, of both churches, own parsonages beside. In some cases there are debts on the church buildings, but the prosperous colored societies seem to have little trouble in paying them off. The Methodist churches have long been influential among the colored people, and have large membership throughout the State. Some of the Methodist Episcopal societies had white pastors, a generation ago. One of these, which had 648 members and property amounting to $8,000 in 1865, had grown to 1,000 members in 1886, with property worth $40,000, including a large cemetery. More interesting than these older churches is the recent growth of the Baptist church. In 1870, there were two societies in Baltimore, one being very small. Soon, a vigorous pastor began the building up of this small society, in a central part of the city. The numbers increased, the work spread, and then a Sunday school and mission work were begun in an outlying street. Soon, the mission grew into a separate society, which now numbers 800 members. In 1885, nine members of this society, in turn, pushed further on, and another society has grown up to over 200 members. Mean-

---

E.—"What else does it show?" *Y.*—"Appreciation for colored enterprise."

E.—"Have there been any other papers here?" *Y.*—"There have."

E.—"Where are they?" *Y.*—"Dead as Julius Cæsar."

E.—"Who killed them?" *Y.*—"The colored people," &c., &c.

time, the parent church of all had sent forth another band of twenty-seven, which in nine years has become nearly 900 and has paid $10,000 for a church building. And during these eighteen years, the parent church has grown in membership from less than 100 to 2,200, and has a church building worth $30,000 free from debt. Another Baptist society, ten years ago, consisted of ten persons, who met in a room over a carpenter's shop. Now, it numbers 550, and has the finest church building used by the colored people of Baltimore, which cost $35,000. Of this sum all but $3,000 is paid; and all but $1,200 was raised from the colored people. To-day, the Baptists have eight societies in Baltimore, with over 5,700 members. The number of colored Baptists in the counties is very small. The growth of the colored Presbyterians is another interesting example. From some years before the war, there was a mission supported by the First Presbyterian church, but by 1880 it numbered only ninety members. Soon after, it became self-supporting, and now numbers 215; while there are two other societies, partly missionary, one with about seventy-five members, the other with about 125.

While the Baptists and Presbyterians have been thus growing, and while the Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches have increased their work—which is largely missionary—among the colored people, there have been movements towards wholesome changes in the other large colored churches. The value of many of the old features of religious life is more and more called in question. The old-time "shout," the frenzy which fastened upon one who "got religion," are passing away as the old-time plantation has passed away. All the ministers present at a district conference of the African Methodist Episcopal church, in 1887, voted for a resolution, offered by one of the present young clergy of Baltimore, that camp and bush-meetings, as carried on among their people, were not productive of sufficient good to make amends for the evil effects they had on the churches. These views are not yet universal and are held more in city than in county, but the

whole body of the churches must become gradually touched by the leaven of education. The influence of an enlightened and progressive clergy cannot be overestimated. It is interesting to see how such men are the real leaders of the people, in Baltimore. The piety and zeal of the old-time minister is everywhere respected, but the one on whom his mantle falls, who has been well educated and looks to the future rather than from the past, will not be satisfied until his people have all possible opportunities for better living.[1]

One work which the leaders should take up is the vigorous spread of young men's christian association rooms, for reading and profitable enjoyment. One association has held weeks of prayer and special meetings, and there have been a few associations connected with churches or of a private nature. The largest Baptist church has recently formed one of over 100 members, meeting weekly, who have distributed several thousand religious papers. A young pastor of one of the large down-town churches preached on the need of reading and meeting rooms, last year, with no response; but, this year, when he again urged the matter, considerable interest was manifested. The barber shops and favorite street corners will be crowded, of an afternoon, with the young men, many of whom know the day's news and talk it over intelligently.[2]

A few of the older generation of colored men have long been interested in associations for profitable enjoyment of a literary or instructive nature. This interest spread widely, a

---

[1] It is interesting to note that the Baptist and Presbyterian colored clergy meet in conference and in preachers' meetings with the white clergy. The work of the Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches here among the colored people has been done by white clergy. There are said to be over 3,000 colored Romanists in Baltimore and a number in Southern Maryland. The work of the Episcopal church has been much advanced by the present bishop of the diocese.

[2] A workingmen's club for young colored men was opened a few years ago, under the lead of an energetic white Episcopal clergyman, but it had not many members and did not survive his departure.

few years ago, until lyceums or "literaries" became fashionable. There were no less than thirteen in Baltimore, and over a half-dozen in the counties, mostly in the large towns. Of those in Baltimore, one or two were private clubs or socials, and two were connected with the Centenary Biblical Institute; the rest were a part of the church work, usually meeting Sunday afternoons in the churches. Early in 1885, a literary convention was held, of seventy-two delegates from nine of the lyceums; and in the Fall following, a permanent literary union was formed, to meet twice a year, for literary exercises, reports of progress, and general encouragement to instructive work. In 1887, several Sunday evening meetings were held by a number of the lyceums, together. But the movement met with considerable opposition, especially from members of the clergy. All approved, of course, any desire for education and improvement, but many held that the lyceums, as conducted, did not lead to those ends, and were at the same time injurious to church work. This opposition was probably least strong in the Methodist Episcopal church, but even there, nearly all the ministers at a local conference of colored clergy, in 1888, agreed that the manner in which the literaries were conducted tended to detract from public worship; and so greater pains were taken to keep away from the Sunday meetings, any irrelevant or irreverent discussions. The result of the experience of the last few years has been, in short, that some of the lyceums have died, and that the surviving ones, as a rule, have been improved. The Literary Union died, also; its death being hastened, possibly, by touches of the spirit of rivalry among leaders and of the deadly influence of politics. At present, there is but one purely literary society connected with the Baptist churches, and that meets during the week; there is one, also meeting during the week, connected with a Presbyterian church; there are Sunday afternoon meetings in five of the Methodist Episcopal churches, held under the auspices of the lyceum of the society, but more or less under the supervision of the pastor; of the African

Methodist Episcopal churches, one or two have week-day meetings, one only has the Sunday afternoon meeting. There is one rather small lyceum at the Biblical Institute. These Sunday meetings are very large, usually, and the exercises—perhaps one should say, because the exercises—are of an entertaining character, often including music, declamations, &c. It is noticeable that the other meetings of the members of the church lyceums, for debates and more purely educational features, are not so frequent or so well attended. In order to unite the best workers in this movement for improvement, there was organized, in 1885, the Monumental Literary and Scientific Association. For a time it met at different churches, but now meets, Tuesday evenings, at the Madison St. Presbyterian church. The actual membership is not large, some sixty or seventy representative men and leaders of the colored people, but the meetings are usually crowded with attentive listeners. The paper or address of the evening is followed by debate. The association is doing a great work.

As education increases, the old "literary," so-called, will give way more and more to such really educational work. Instead of laughing over a paper on the "Death of King Pain by St. Jacob's Oil," or debating "Which is the more attractive, beauty or manners?" or "Whether it was really a whale that swallowed Jonah?" the young men and women are now discussing "The future of our boys and girls," or "What is the cause of the anti-negro spirit in the United States—his color, his past condition or his present condition?" or the merits and demerits of the Morgan emigration bill. The daily paper now published in Baltimore by colored men recently said—and this is a good example of many of the admirable editorials which have been offered the colored people—"The literary associations of this city are doing much toward enlightening the colored youth, but their work should not stop with their weekly meetings for addresses, songs and declamations. They should organize reading rooms, with the best periodicals, newspapers and books, inviting the young

men and women to spend an evening in profitable reading. The colored people of Baltimore ought to open and support at least one large reading room upon the same basis as the Y. M. C. Association. . . . . Until our race learns to use such means to enlighten the masses, the race problem can never be solved."[1]

There is probably no city in the land where there are as many societies among the colored people as in Baltimore. And several of the large societies which have spread far and wide, North and South, had their origin here. Nearly all the societies are beneficial, but they may be divided in general into two classes, those beneficial merely, and those with secret features.

Among the things which the colored people dislike, are very noticeably the public hospital, ante- or post-mortem surgical operations, and burial in potter's field. In order to help one another in sickness and provide for decent burial, from a system of small but regular payments, beneficial societies were formed among little groups of acquaintances or fellow laborers. In Baltimore, they date back to 1820, surely, and were afterwards, in the days of excitement over slavery, specially exempted from the state laws forbidding meetings of colored people. Twenty-five at least had been formed before the war; from 1860–1870, seventeen or more were formed; since 1870 twenty or more have been added, several as late as 1884–5. There are now, thus, between sixty and seventy. The number of members vary from a dozen to over a hundred; often of men and women both, often of a group of women connected with some church or denomination, or of men in some particular work, as barbers or draymen, &c. In 1884, was held a meeting of many connected with these societies, to rouse a more general interest in the work, and very

[1] The Ledger, Feb. 15th, 1890.

interesting reports were presented. Forty of them gave an aggregate membership of over 2,100. The numbers varied from sixteen to 121, but as a rule were from thirty to sixty. In the whole course of their work—and reports were very full—nearly 1,400 members had been buried, over $45,000 having been given for funeral expenses; $125,000 had been given as sick dues; $27,000 had been paid widows by some thirty of the societies; over $10,700 had been given towards house rent; and over $11,300 been paid for incidental expenses. Yet there had been paid back to the members of many of the societies, from unexpended balances, as dividends, a total of over $40,000; and there remained in the banks, to the credit of the societies, over $21,400, and in the treasurers' hands cash balances amounting to some $1,400. Five had small sums invested, besides; and one, the goodly sum of $5,642. The total amount of money handled by all had been nearly $290,000.

These societies vary somewhat in details. The usual fees from members are fifty cents a month; the usual benefits are $4.00 a week for a number of weeks, and then reduced sums, in sickness, and $40.00 for burial. Some pay as long as sickness lasts. Some give widows' dues from special assessments, according to need. One, for example, the Friendly Beneficial Society, organized chiefly by the members of a Baptist church, some fifteen years ago, with the usual fees and benefits, carries a standing fund of about $1,000, and the yearly fees of the members has paid the current expenses of from $300 to $500, and has usually allowed an annual dividend of $5.00 to each. The colored Barbers' Society, over fifty years old, required for membership, originally, an experience of three years as apprentice, but now, of two years as apprentice or of three years as a "boss" barber—in addition, always, to good recommendations. The fees and benefits are the usual ones, save that $80 is given at the death of a member, for funeral and other expenses. Attendance at meetings, held quarterly, is required under penalty of a small fine. Dividends have been declared from time to time. Three societies, originally very large, have

been gotten up in the last twenty years by one colored woman, whose name one of them bears. The constitution of one of these, for example, opens with a preamble in which the members agree, "as a band of sisters," to unite for mutual relief in sickness and death. Besides the ordinary officers, there are to be six managers and twelve stewards. The former receive the dues, and visit the sick members within twenty-four hours after receiving notice of illness, see that stewards are appointed for special care of the sick, and make every arrangement for a decent and timely burial of deceased members. Members who are receiving sick benefits must be under the care of a suitable physician, and are entitled to $4.00 a week for eight weeks, and then to $2.00 a week for eight weeks, when further aid rests in the discretion of the society. The dues are fifty-one cents a month; but members must be of good health and morals. A member becomes entitled to benefits after four months of regular payment of dues. The funeral benefit is $40, which is paid the family in all cases, for one might be a member of several societies and the benefit from anyone of them would give a proper burial. At burials, the members are expected, under penalty of fine except when excused, to assemble in regulation dress, of black dress, shawl and gloves, with lead-colored bonnet and trimming, and white cuffs. The society will follow no other in funeral processions. Some of the other societies, as the "Union Star of the Rising Generation," do not compel a general attendance at funerals, a special committee being chosen to represent the society.

A few of these beneficial societies have disbanded, a few have changed to secret societies. Very few of them have been badly managed—although unincorporated and without any public oversight—and everybody seems to speak well of them and of their work. One colored woman, for instance, belongs to five; in one family, in another part of the city, the husband belongs to four, the wife to four, and the daughter to one. It is said that one woman, who was instrumental in forming many, belonged to eleven when she died; and that another belonged

to fourteen, and received sick benefits amounting to some $50.00 a week, at one time. Yet new societies do not seem to be growing up in any number, and in most of the old ones the membership has fallen off. This may partly be accounted for by the fact that members are chosen with some care, and that they can come in without paying an admission fee only when, as after dividends have been declared, the financial standing of all is the same. It is likely, however, that persons have been more attracted to the secret societies, and to the legally incorporated beneficial associations, which have more recently been formed.[1]

Secret societies among the colored people are now very numerous. The most important ones date back to before the war. The colored Masons and Independent Order of Odd Fellows do practically the same work as the whites, but the organizations are entirely independent of the whites here, the colored men having been obliged, from the state of public feeling in the United States in the old days, to get their charter from the white brethren in England. The colored Masons have increased in Maryland. In 1884, there were nearly 500, now there are probably 700, mostly in Baltimore. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows is much larger, fifty lodges out of the seventy-seven working ones, giving a membership of over 2,300. The absence of reports makes estimates of little worth, but it is not likely that the order has grown as much, in proportion, as the Masons. The fifty lodges mentioned had, during the past two years, aided their sick,

---

[1] Connected with one of the Baptist churches is a society of some twenty-five young women, which has a banking committee to receive and invest all sums deposited by members. The money is subject to call, together with any interest accrued to it. When one of the members marries, a general assessment of twenty cents is levied, for a fund for the bride. There is also a sinking-fund society, with some sixty members, who are encouraged to save small sums which would be spent often in profitless ways, and who thus find reasonable sums to their credit at Christmas or other special occasions.

buried eighty-three brothers, and relieved seventy-seven widows and seventy orphans, at a total expenditure of over $13,000. The order held real estate worth $18,500, and had over $10,000 in cash. About ten years ago, the ranks of the Odd Fellows split, the discontented wing starting the National Progressive Order of Odd Fellows, an entirely independent organization, managed by its members without any trouble or expense by reason of conventions or "committees of management" elsewhere. This order now numbers about 1,500, the last five years showing a small increase. They are mostly in Baltimore. The property of the order is over $5,000, a considerable increase. The dues and benefits are mostly like those of the beneficial societies, but in addition, $20 is paid a member on the death of his wife, and $10 or $15 on the death of a child.

Of the secret societies peculiar to, or originating in, Baltimore, the most influential are the Samaritans, the Nazarites, the Galilean Fishermen, the Wise Men. The first two were instituted some years before the War. The first has spread from Baltimore, during the forty years of its existence, to a number of states; but a third of all the lodges and nearly a third of all the members are in Maryland. About one half of the order are women, Daughters of Samaria, and they meet by themselves in their own lodges, in the afternoons, except occasionally in the country, where they cannot well meet in the day time. There are now in Maryland, fifty-eight lodges, with a membership of 1,925, a slight gain over the preceding year, but apparently a considerable loss in the past six or eight years. The order has held a building, Samaritan Temple, for some years, but with some difficulty, evidently. During the past year, the lodges in Maryland have paid out nearly $5,000, have invested over $4,000 and hold over $10,000 in property and cash. The Nazarites are almost all in Maryland, mostly in Baltimore, and now number about 900 men, in twenty "pastures," and over 1,600 women in twenty-one "courts." During the last few years there has

been a decrease of about a hundred in the men, and an increase of women by several hundred. The order does not own much property, but has $25,000 in the bank. Like the Samaritans, it requires a membership of six months before benefits are given, and a year of non-payment of dues makes one liable to suspension. After some weeks of non-payment, a member becomes unfinancial. The Nazarites do not pay sick benefits, as a rule, for more than sixteen weeks a year. The order of Galilean Fishermen, of men and women together, was begun in Baltimore, in 1856, by a handful of earnest workers. It was legally incorporated in Maryland in 1869, and has since spread in large numbers, far and wide; becoming apparently the largest society among the colored people. In Maryland, a few years ago, it was not as large as the Samaritan order; in 1884, there were eighteen adult tabernacles of 2,269 members, holding but little over $2,000 in the bank. Of these, all but 259 were in Baltimore. Since then, a building for meetings and a general headquarters of the order has been erected, the Galilean Temple; many members have been added; and the order has become influential. It is said to number now over 5,000 in Maryland, and a few disaffected members are forming an independent order. The order of Seven Wise Men is a more recent order, having now, mostly in Baltimore, some two thousand or more members, about equally divided between men and women, meeting in lodges and "households," separately. In one year, recently, this order buried twenty-four members, and relieved 201, paying out altogether $4,300, and having left some $2,000 in property and $4,175 in cash.

These are the largest societies only; there are many more of the same secret-beneficial nature that might be given, as the Sons and Daughters of Moses, Sons and Daughters of Ezekiel, Queens of Night, Hosts of Israel, the order of True Reformers, &c., &c. Among the families and friends of members of societies which do not include women, a number of societies have been formed, auxiliary to or more or less

dependent on the others. Thus, the Queen Esther's Households are connected with one branch of the Odd Fellows; the Sisterhood of Miriam with the other; and there is an auxiliary body to further the beneficial work of the Masons. Many societies also have juvenile branches, with a system of small dues and benefits, and of promotion of members, at a certain age, to the adult bodies. Thus the Galileans have several juvenile tabernacles; the Nazarites have nearly 600 "ewes," as the children are called, under the case of special "shepherdesses;" the Wise Men have some 500 children; the Samaritans recently had nineteen lodges, but the number of children was not very large. The various temperance societies have done considerable work among the young.

The secret features or peculiar ceremonies in these societies, vary from the few sisters in colored capes who say the ritual at the coffin of a deceased member, to the anniversary procession of the Galilean Fishermen, a few years ago, in which—consisting of over a thousand members in full regalia—were the Bishops commandery, the Gideonites commandery, the Priesthood of twelve persons, representing the tribes of Israel, each bearing a white stone on which the name of the tribe was cut, and 500 Virgins of the Ascension, with white dresses and veils and with purple streamers about the waist, with the Ark of the Covenant in their midst.

We may disapprove of such secret societies, but we must remember that secret rites and ceremonial displays are not peculiar to any one race or color. The colored people, indeed, are peculiarly imitative. It was natural that many of them should be attracted by comradeship, and by display and secrecy alike. The larger societies seem to have thrown their doors wide open; one has just advertised in the paper for 25,000 recruits from one year of age to seventy-five.[1] A few years since, societies were very fashionable and popular. At

---

[1] The Galilean Fishermen.

a meeting of the colored clergy of Baltimore, about ten years ago—when occasional meetings were held for the discussion of non-sectarian matters of interest—the question was raised, not without some opposition, that secret societies were not beneficial to the people. Only three of the clergy present were opposed to them. It is now the opinion of many intelligent colored men that the societies are not as popular as they were; surely, if the clergymen were again called on, as to the benefit of them to the colored race, a goodly number would oppose them altogether, a majority would oppose all expenditure of time and money in useless forms and show. Many of the most well-to-do, influential and intelligent colored men have no sympathy with them, as they have been carried on.

The chief criticisms against the secret societies by those who have no part in them, are that much money is uselessly spent, and that morality and the progress of the race are not really advanced. It may please some to feel that their little lodge in Maryland may secure charters from some "committee of management" elsewhere, or may be represented by delegates in a national council at Chicago, but these things cost money and no hard-working individual in Maryland is bettered thereby. Ministers will often bear witness to the fact that lodge meeting will draw from prayer meeting, and lodge expenses from church offerings. Many of the better class of colored women oppose meetings for women at night, and any general mingling of men and women, as in some of these large orders. There are direct charges that persons of bad character are not rigidly excluded. A colored preacher said, in a sermon to a number of benevolent societies in 1884:— the secret societies have proven themselves useful, but they are burdened with some of low morality; you say, let these alone, perhaps they will change, but you have waited long, and they don't change! In a few cases, there may be some ground for complaint that the management has been bad;

but this would seem in part due to a fault of the members in trusting too much and too long, without demanding business-like methods and reports.

Already many wholesome changes in these secret societies have been quietly going on. A few years ago, there were the street parades and ostentatious funeral processions—when the death of a member occasionally, said a colored man with a smile, was a God-send to a society; there were sermons constantly being preached to special bodies, calling out the young and old of both sexes on Sunday night, in expensive regalia. All this has been much given up; and there is every reason to believe that experience and education will have the same effect here that they have had in the religious life of the colored people, that useless forms will be thrown more and more aside. In as far as the societies can become purely beneficial, with strict business management, in so far they will meet the approval of all, and be of the greatest help to the race.

Several regularly incorporated mutual aid associations in Baltimore are being well patronized by colored people. The largest one, the Baltimore Mutual Aid Society, has thousands of colored subscribers, and employs several colored agents. In 1885 was incorporated the colored Mutual Beneficial Association—the only one in the State—entirely managed by colored men, with a colored doctor, and a prominent colored lawyer for counsel. It is endorsed by all the clergy, has grown rapidly, and proven itself worthy of the support of the people. The sick benefits vary, according to the weekly payments and to age, from seventy-five cents to $7.00 a week, but not for more than twenty weeks in any one year; the funeral benefit from $8.00 to $60.00. In these first few years, some $10,000 has been paid out in benefits. The sworn statement recently filed in the office of the State insurance commissioner, shows that, during the past year, the number of deaths has been nine, and of members claiming

sick benefits, 203; while the total number of members was 2,909, a very large increase.[1]

There are a considerable number of colored men in the Grand Army of the Republic, in Baltimore. They form several posts by themselves; but no color line is drawn in the sessions of the department of Maryland, and colored men are represented on the committee of administration; while one colored man of Baltimore is now on the staff of the national commander-in-chief of the Grand Army.

Social life among the colored people is very much like that among the whites, only on a smaller scale; a reflection of the larger world about them. There are the small fashionable groups; there are the large masses who are out of fashion. There are the prosperous and unpretentious, and the poor and showy. Among some, in fashionable circles, we find New Year receptions, at which visitors are received in full dress, and cake and wines are served. A few privileged daughters are brought out into society by a party or reception. At one party, for instance, the dresses were elaborate and many flowers were worn; the men were mostly in full dress with button-hole bouquets; and a supper was served at midnight. Assemblies are also frequently held, usually given under the management of some social club, in a public hall, with entrance open to all who purchase tickets. To one of these, so we read, fully two-thirds of the guests came in carriages, and flowers were abundant. The society columns of the colored papers have often had elaborate accounts of the toilets at these assemblies

---

[1] Regularity in payment of dues is strictly enjoined. There are special provisions for cases of total disability. No benefits are given in cases of confinement, diseases peculiar to women or venerial troubles; nor at death from suicide, under the law, or from military service, &c. The only objection heard against the mutual aid societies is that they are inclined to take advantage of technicalities in their favor, sometimes to the injury of a worthy applicant for aid.

and receptions. Nor does gaiety, in these circles, even stop with the Spring, for we read of visitors to Atlantic City, Newport, and even Bar Harbor, and of a reception in evening dress at a summer resort in Western Maryland. This is all among a favored few only. At the other and larger extreme of social life, there are the little entertainments given in order to raise a few dollars for charity or pay off some house rent; and further back still, the "cake-walk" and other diversions of a ruder kind, which come from the old plantation days. Picnics and excursions have always been held in Summer, but these are usually connected with some church or other society.

One thing peculiar to the colored people was the popularity, a few years ago, of small social clubs. There were probably 150 of these in Baltimore, with an average membership of twenty or thereabouts. The names were various: Golden Anchor, Montebello, Immaculate Conception, Mexican Croquet, Amphion Pleasure, Christian Leaf, Entre Nous, Ne Plus Ultra, Nonpareil, Private Waiters, &c. A few have had club-rooms, and several have had some system of friendly or beneficial work, but they met, as a rule, in private houses, and were for pleasure only. Sometimes, sermons were preached to them; one Sunday night, for instance, eighteen of them attended a special service. They frequently gave parties and promenades as benefits for their own members. At one, some 400 persons were present, representing fifteen or more clubs. Another club, of only eleven members, sold 1,000 tickets to an entertainment. Another gave a yearly concert and promenade, at which prizes—on one occasion, a silver cup and a plush album—were awarded to the best promenaders. On one programme were twenty promenades, led by leaders of twenty clubs respectively. At one of the most elaborate receptions, there was a crowd of men and boys selling flowers about the entrance, there were the conveniences of dressing-rooms, with checks, there were visitors from out of town, the orchestra was large, and the supper included oysters, croquettes and peas, salad, Roman punch, ices, fruits, wines and coffee.

It is no wonder that many old heads among the colored people, and some of the young heads, too, looked with regret on the great expense, the late hours, and the many temptations to careless living, which were fostered by these socials and promenades. Some of the clergy preached against them, and wholesome advice was given both by editorials and communications in the colored weekly, at that time, the *Star*. One vigorous writer—known to be a prominent and intelligent man—under the *nomme-de-plume* of Uncle Zeke, said that these social pleasures were "fast becoming a curse to our young people," and calculated that some $56,000 were wasted in money every Winter in halls, dresses, hacks, music, refreshment, &c., by the 300 or more promenades given. Besides, he added, "millions lost in health and character"—and yet, in spite of all this, our people whine at being poor!

In this respect, again, the strong influence of the clergy and intelligent leaders, ambitious for the race, seems to be bearing fruit in a general progress. The expensive social and the promenade are less popular, and the entertainments and picnics that are held are, as a rule, more creditable. The cake-walks and drum-corp matches—and there were nine colored drum-corps, a few years ago—used often to end with necessary interference of the police, and the patrol-wagon has sometimes been summoned to the assembly halls. One who has for years played a violin at dances of the colored people, recalls, with a laugh, how he often had to retreat for safety beneath the stage, and bears witness to the improvement, now. But there is still vast room for improvement.

There are clubs and socials, of course, which have been useful as well as pleasant. One, for instance, became a publishing company, to encourage one of the colored papers, and thus exert at large an influence for good; another is connected with a church society and gives musical and literary evenings. Some of these have done good church work. There are also several musical clubs or associations, of not large membership; one of which, of some fifteen male voices, has given one

or two good concerts. There is one colored orchestra of eight or ten pieces, which does quite a good business in playing for assemblies; and there are several bands, one of them being quite well known. There are in Baltimore several professional organists and music teachers, reflecting considerable credit on the colored race; and organ recitals have been given in several churches. There have also been one or two dramatic clubs. One of these, in 1888, gave a public performance of Othello.

Prominent in the best social life of the colored people are their clergy, and their professional class, their doctors, lawyers and school-teachers, a class of educated and progressive men, as a rule, just now growing up in Maryland.

The public libraries in Baltimore are open to the colored people. And tickets for seats in the galleries of the theatres are usually sold them, the rule being in all cases that whites only are admitted to the floor. But hotels and restaurants patronized by whites will not serve colored persons, except the railway restaurants. When a colored clergyman of Baltimore was refused food at the Relay House station, and complained to the president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, several years ago, he was assured that the attendants had acted without orders, and should be reprimanded. Some little complaint has been made by respectable colored men against the discrimination between white and colored citizens in the city park, in that the lessees of the restaurant will serve the latter only at a stand without the restaurants. In such matters as these, however, the complaint of the colored people usually runs against a high wall, of strong and widely spread public sentiment against any changes.

The slave-code, as we saw, was wiped out of the statute books, in 1867, together with some of the laws which had grown up with it, discriminating against all persons of color. There still remained some of these laws, together with much old custom and old ways of thinking.

Before noting the important steps by which these laws and customs have been done away or modified, it is important to understand plainly that the leading colored men, while zealous for the abolition of all race discrimination, have clearly recognized that civil equality and social equality are two entirely different things, and that the latter cannot be brought within the sphere of legislation. It is evident to anyone, be he white or colored, who looks about him and thinks of what he sees, that social matters must always be regulated by individual taste. Though Alderman White and Alderman O'Harrity have desks in the same room in a New England city hall, there is no social equality, or obligation even, created between them thereby—beyond the ordinary politeness which every gentleman will show to a fellow man who may be near him. Said one of the first colored political leaders, to the republican state convention in 1867: "You talk about equality —I recognize political equality; there is no such thing as social equality or moral equality. A man makes his equality in proportion as he studies, reads and learns. I am glad to see the day that colored and white can associate in the same terms of political equality—I hope there is nobody in the audience that is afraid of the great bear of social equality. When there is a special affinity between the intellectual powers of the white and black man, they will be one socially." And, he added, the poor man sits beside the millionaire in the car but that does not make him the social equal. "The negroes do not ask for any special laws," wrote a prominent and progressive clergyman of Baltimore, twenty years later; "we only ask that the laws that be, be applied equally to all. We don't want any social rights. There are plenty of black people and white ones I would not allow to enter my house." The colored people, said an editorial in a colored paper, never did demand social rights; they "are building up their own social circle." "Many evil disposed white people," said a prominent colored lawyer of Baltimore to a large gathering of his people, in 1888, "distort the efforts for civil and legal rights

of colored people into a clamor for social equality, thus engendering prejudice to our cause. Colored people no more demand social equality than do white people desire it. I have seen white men that I would not let black my boots. No legislature enactment can or ought to regulate social matters. Animals have their choice and preference; why not men?" And but a few weeks since, a committee of an influential body of colored citizens of Baltimore, in presenting to his honor the mayor and one or two prominent citizens a book on the injustice of race discrimination, again bore witness to the fact that they asked for the fullest recognition of civil rights alone, which was not to be confounded with social rights. The two, they said, "stand widely apart."

In 1867, Chief Justice Chase, of the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of a young colored girl, declared null and void the old law of Maryland which did not require the master of a colored apprentice to have any education given, while masters of white apprentices had to have them taught a certain rudimentary knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic. Also, Judge Giles, of the district court in Baltimore, protected several colored men, of Kent and Anne Arundel counties, in the exercise of the suffrage; holding that while the right to vote was not given in the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution, the right not to be discriminated against, from race or color, was certainly conveyed.[1] But the first step of great interest, was the abolition of discrimination in the use of the horse-cars.

Colored people had been allowed to ride only on the front platforms of the cars. There was no protection there from bad weather, and no seat—excepting when, as is said to have occasionally happened, a good-natured driver would give his stool to some old or feeble colored person. Yet the fare was the same. If a colored woman, however, were attending her

---

[1] 1st Abbot, 87. Cases of U. S. *vs.* Mason and U. S. *vs.* Shumaker, Boone *et als.*

mistress or carried a white child, she could enter the car freely; and there are cases known in which a colored woman who had long distances to go would borrow a white child, to entitle her to a seat. So the custom of the community remained—and there was probably little thought about it—until early in 1870, a colored man from New York quietly sat down in a Baltimore street-car, was thereupon ejected, and therefore entered suit against the railway company, in the United States court. Damages were awarded in the sum of $10, the court—Judge Giles—holding that the companies might provide separate cars or compartments, with reasonable equality of accommodations, but had no right to discriminate as had been done, between passengers who were orderly and offered to pay their fare. The railway company at once put on a number of cars marked "colored persons admitted into this car." "We advise all our colored citizens," said the republican organ, the *American*, next day, "for the present to be satisfied with the provisions that have been made for their transportation, and not to insist on what very probably is their legal right—to ride in any car. . . . Before six months pass by, the red-lettered labels will have disappeared from our streets." The separate cars did not bring about what was intended, for many whites, rather than lose time on the street corner, took the first car, whether colored persons were in it or not. Within a week, a resolution was introduced in the city council, to forbid whites from riding in the cars marked for blacks; and the old straw of slavery and of divine separation of races was thrashed over by one or two members—but it amounted to nothing more than a reference of the resolution to the committee on railways. Other street lines that were started made no distinction between orderly passengers. Finally, in less than a year, a colored man from Virginia, on being ejected from one of the ordinary cars of the old company, brought suit against it for $2,500 in the United States circuit court. The testimony brought out the interesting facts, from officers of the company, that four out of fifteen cars were then being

run for colored people, and that of the passengers who rode in these cars, specially marked, ninety-six out of every hundred were white. The question as argued was chiefly of fact, as to the conveniences afforded the blacks, following the previous decision of Judge Giles; and the court, Judges Giles and Bond, charged that if the plaintiff was refused transportation because of his color, after having offered to pay his fare, he could recover reasonable damages. The jury gave him $40. Thereupon, the red-lettered signs came down, and all the cars have since been open to all orderly passengers. Such is now the custom, and people apparently think no more of it than they did of some other customs, years ago.[1]

In 1882, the State Medical and Chirurgical Faculty admitted colored doctors, and there are now three colored doctors in Baltimore members of it. A leader among them bears witness to the professional courtesy with which he is treated by the white doctors. Several have offered the facilities of their laboratories to him; consultations have been freely given when asked; and he is soon to present a report on a matter of interest at a meeting of the Faculty. Altogether, there are six colored doctors in Baltimore, two of them new comers, and at least two well known ones outside—one in Annapolis and one on the Eastern Shore. The most striking fact is that those of them who have received a college or university medical-school education have had to get it outside of Maryland. One comes from the Harvard Medical School, another comes back to his birth-place from the Howard Medical School at Washington, a third comes recently with high honor from Michigan University at Ann Harbor; but no medical college in Maryland has as yet opened its doors to a colored student. Many of the medical students in Baltimore are of Southern birth and bringing up. One colored student has recently been refused admittance to the University of Maryland School, and

---

[1] See papers for April 28–May 3, 1870; Nov. 11, &c., 1871.

has gone, at considerable expense, to a Northern school. It is not likely, however, that this discrimination will last. The medical instruction of the great Johns Hopkins foundation will be open to all; and there are some influential members of the management of the University of Maryland who feel that the profession of medicine is too high and beneficial a calling to know any narrow bounds.[1] There is also, as yet, no dental school at which colored men can study here. There were formerly two colored dentists, one of whom came from Liberia. Now there are three, who have gotten their education or experience by pluck and observation. One was assistant for six years to a white dentist, who gave him regular instruction; one was for years the janitor in the dental college; the third was also employed in a dental office. All of them now have certificates of recognition from the Maryland Dental Association. The colored people patronize both white and colored dentists. And, it is interesting to add in conclusion, the leading colored doctors have had not a few white patients, notably Germans. The doctors and dentists here mentioned devote themselves exclusively to their professions.

For several years after the war, colored organizations could not carry fire-arms in Baltimore, and the right was afterwards taken away, after an affair between a colored company and a crowd of bystanders on the streets. The laws limited the militia to whites, for years, but there are now three independent colored companies on the rolls, two of them in Baltimore. They encamp by themselves. One company—so report goes—was the result of some political work. The brigade officers have spoken well of the drilling of some of them.

There has been no system of discrimination between whites and blacks, on the steam railroads in Maryland. But the

---

[1] At a mass meeting of colored people, in 1873, resolutions of gratitude were passed, to Johns Hopkins, for his great gifts to the public, in which white and colored were both to share. Every man and woman rose as the vote was taken, that "we will teach our children to do honor to his memory when we shall have passed away."

right to use some regulation, within the State, has been recognized by the United States court here. When, in 1876, some colored excursionists on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. were ordered—with some rough language on the part of a local official—from the cars of a regular train into cars specially put on for the picnic, suits were brought against the railroad by eighteen of them, for damages of $500 each, under the supplementary civil rights act of the preceding year, for being refused admission to a car with white passengers, and compelled to occupy a separate and inferior car. Judge Giles decided the matter against them, on constitutional grounds—calling attention to the difference between these cases and the horse-car cases, in which the plaintiffs had not been citizens of Maryland—holding that, in accord with recent decisions of the Supreme Court, the privilege of using any public conveyance, for local travel in a State, was not a right belonging to a citizen of the United States, as such.[1]

When the article forbidding intermarriage of free negroes and whites was wiped out of the code, in 1867, with many of the "black" laws, a member of the house of delegates obtained leave to introduce a bill for another law of the same purport—but no law was enacted. In 1884, however, all marriages between whites and those of negro descent to the third generation inclusive, were prohibited under penalty of imprisonment for from eighteen months to ten years. There does not seem to have been any special call for the law at that time; on the other hand, there was little opposition to its passage in the assembly.[2] But in December, 1886, nearly three years after, a case under this law was brought before the circuit court of Washington county, in Western Maryland. For some years a colored man and a white woman, with

---

[1] 1 Hughes, 536.

[2] The vote was 14 to 4 in the senate, and 61 to 12 in the house. It is said that the marriage of Mr. Frederick Douglass to a white woman, though in no way connected with Maryland, caused the introduction of the bill.

several children, had been living together, when the man determined, led partly if not wholly by the influence of religion, to have the sanction of marriage to their relations. On being married they were indicted, and the court gave them eighteen months imprisonment, the lightest possible sentence. This case created considerable feeling among the colored clergy and others throughout the State. A large meeting was held in Baltimore, and several prominent colored men wrote at length in the papers and in addresses, for a movement for the repeal of the law. A petition for the pardon of the offenders, signed by a few white clergymen also, was presented by a committee to the governor; but a pardon was not granted.

It is important to note that the colored leaders desired a repeal of this law, as of all such laws, not on grounds of social equality, but chiefly because they thought it a race discrimination, and a cloak for immoral living. Said one speaker, at a large meeting, a clergyman: "It is as unpleasant for a high-minded colored person to discuss this question of intermarrying as it is for a high-minded white person. Intermarriage after the law shall have been repealed will be a matter of selection, and there is no just reason why anybody should be offended. Our object is to make it respectable. The white people have mingled with us in the dark, but when we want to bring the clear light of day upon such things . . . they are shocked." The leading colored paper in Baltimore, edited by a prominent man of the younger men, opposed intermarriage of the races, with a belief in the excellence of the colored women, but urged his people to raise again, and increase, their efforts for a repeal of all "black" laws. "Shall this man and woman," he asked, "for obeying God's behest, to enter into clean, pure, sacred matrimony, be permitted to suffer martyrdom, and we remain in masterly inactivity?" It is doubtful if the agitation accomplished anything, considering the present state of public sentiment on such questions.[1]

---

[1] A white man of Annapolis is now awaiting trial for marrying, recently, a colored woman.

In the old days, such a thing as a colored juror was not dreamed of, for the testimony, even, of a colored man would not be received in a case in which any white person was interested. Since 1867, the juries had been selected from two lists, one of "white male taxables," the other of all the names on the poll-books used at elections. All colored voters were on the latter list, of course; but nothing in the law prescribed who should, and who should not, be selected out of these lists, and the officials who made the selections very naturally followed their inclinations, which, as a rule, were opposed to giving to colored persons any more recognition than necessary. As time went on, colored men were taken on the juries, more or less, in some counties; in Baltimore there have been some excellent colored jurors. In some counties, on the other hand, none but white men had ever been drawn. The first colored juror, for instance, in Anne Arundel county, is said to have served in 1880. In 1885, the counsel for a colored man under trial for a very heinous assault on a white woman, in Baltimore county—adjoining Baltimore city—tried to remove the case to the United States circuit court, on the ground that there was a partial exclusion of colored men from the jury box, by the laws of Maryland, and that, on account of color, no colored man had ever been drawn in that county. The criminal court of the city, to which the case had been removed in order to avoid the strong popular feeling in the county, denied the motion for removal. This opinion was sustained by the court of appeals; which said that if the law required jurors to be drawn from the list of white taxables only, the objection of the counsel would be good, but the taxables were all on the poll list, and so it was practically the poll list from which jurors were drawn. As to which of the races would preponderate on a jury, would depend on the official judgment as to which had the highest standard of the "intelligence, sobriety and integrity" called for in the laws. To put colored men on juries because of color, would be a violation of law, as well as to exclude them therefor. Some of the colored

leaders, anxious to have the jury law tested by the highest tribunal, set about to raise the necessary sum—about $50.00—for entering the case in the United States Supreme Court. But the matter was not quickly pushed; the advisability of action in this case was questioned by some—and the very day that the money was finally handed the prisoner's counsel, but a few days before the time of execution under the sentence, the man was taken from the county jail by a mob and lynched. The chief cause of any difference of opinion among the colored people as to the appeal, was that public sentiment might misunderstand the movement for one of sympathy for the accused man. It would be better, said a colored paper of Baltimore, to take up some case of larceny for a test, than one in which the crime was so horrible and the proof of guilt so plain. The leaders of the movement, while zealous against any race discrimination, urged that they had no desire to shield a man properly convicted of crime.[1]

A very intelligent colored man, who has served as a grand juror, states that little is usually said about any person under suspicion, before some juror asks the question: "Is he white or colored?" In what way, ask the colored people, does the color of a man's skin enter into guilt? The fact is, not that the average juror would be, or will be, prejudiced, but that customs cannot be quickly changed—as political conditions, for instance, may be revolutionized. No one can deny the existence of race prejudice in certain cases, notably those of felonious assault by blacks. And it is believed that, in the counties especially, in previous years, many a young colored fellow has been sent to jail or penitentiary for some petty theft, where a white man would have been handled lightly. On the other hand, there has been a large class of more or less idle blacks; and the propensity of the race to pilfer is well known. But in how far, again, the white man has been responsible for this class of blacks, is not an easy question to answer. Until

---

[1] 64 Md. Reports, 40.

the opening of the reformatory at Cheltenham, colored boys were sent to prison or the jails. And that valuable institution would never have been opened, if it had not been for the Prisoner's Aid Society and a number of white subscribers, of Baltimore, largely republicans by politics.[1]

But the colored papers, while looking for a day when all men in public station shall be color blind, have been able to note, from time to time, such cases as that on the Eastern Shore, in which a white man not only got the contempt of the better classes in the community but was fined some $15, by a magistrate, for striking a very respectable colored woman with a whip; or that of another colored women who received a slap in the face and other indignities from a white man—against whom she was entering a complaint for a previous assault—and who was awarded $1,000 by a jury in the United States district court; or, again, the interesting fact that of the few cases brought, for some time, in Baltimore, under the new law prescribing a sound whipping for men convicted of wife beating, two had been white and one colored.[2] And in 1889, a young white man, of well-to-do parents, was sent to Baltimore jail for several months, for a common assault on a rather degraded colored girl.

Early in 1885, suit was brought in the U. S. district court by six colored persons against the steamer *Sue* for unjust discrimination on account of color, in that, holding first-class tickets, they were forced into inferior cabins. The court stated that there were two issues, one of law, as to whether owners could separate passengers for any reason on account of color, and one of fact, as to whether the separate cabins were equal in comfort and convenience. It was a matter of interstate commerce, for the boat took them to Virginia, but as congress

---

[1] For these various reasons, and from the danger of dealing, in general, with mere tables of figures, it is believed that no facts of great value will be gotten from comparisons of jail and prison reports. The charity organization of Baltimore is little troubled by colored persons.

[2] 1885.

had refrained from legislation on it, owners were allowed, by decisions of the Supreme Court, to adopt such reasonable regulations as local laws permitted. The leaning of the Supreme Court had been that, to some extent and under certain circumstances, a separation of the races was allowable. The common law said that the regulations made by carriers must be reasonable and tend to the comfort and safety of the passengers generally, and that equal accommodations in comfort and safety must be offered to all who pay the same price. Steamboat men had stated that it was customary to separate the races, on all night boats on the bay, and that the great majority of passengers would demand this. Testimony had also shown that the cabin to which the plaintiffs were allotted was much inferior to the cabin for first-class whites. "The separation of the colored from the white passengers, solely on the ground of race and color, goes to the verge of the carrier's legal right, and such a regulation cannot be upheld unless bona fide and diligently the officers of the ship see to it that the separation is free from any actual discrimination in comfort or attention." So saying, the court awarded the plaintiffs $100 each.[1] The Baltimore *Herald*, in speaking of the case, said the colored people would now be given accommodations "more in conformity with the notion that a colored person is a human being and not a brute;" the *American* said the decision was "so obviously just that it must appeal to the good sense of all;" the *Sun* appears to have made no editorial comment. A *Sun* reporter interviewed several steamboat agents, all of whom feared that the decision would cause some unpleasantness in future. The colored paper, the *Director*, was thankful for the decision, but did not think the learned judge had gone far enough in the right direction.

Since then, a suit has been brought before the United States courts here, by a colored clergyman, against another steamer running from Baltimore to Virginia. The complaint was of

---

[1] 22 F. R., 843.

discrimination in the dining-saloon and unjust treatment resulting therefrom. It appears that there was one table set apart for white and another for colored passengers, but with the intention that both should be equally served. The plaintiff insisted on going to the table for whites, whereupon the three white passengers took seats at the other table, where there chanced to be no colored persons. Both courts decided against the plaintiff, holding that all common carriers are bound to furnish equal accommodations for those holding equal tickets, and that the steamboat had made a separation but no distinction. And, added the judge of the higher court, on dismissing the libel with costs, the appellant appears to have been the person who made the greatest distinction against colored people, by refusing to sit at their table.[1]

Beside the prohibition of intermarriage and the partial discrimination in the jury law, the word "white" still remained, in the code, in the bastardy law and the law regulating the practice of attorneys in the State. No colored man could practice law here, and colored women were not recognized in the law which allowed any white woman to make known the father of her illegitimate child, that he might be required to secure some means to the county or city for the support of the child. Several efforts had been quietly made by some of the colored people to have the word "white" struck out of these laws by the legislature. In 1884, a bill to open the State bar to colored lawyers was reported favorably by the judiciary committee. A petition for its passage was presented the house, with a hundred signatures; and the paper with the largest circulation in Maryland, the conservative organ, the *Sun*, said in its editorial columns: "the law has no right to keep a colored man from earning his bread in any honest way he may see fit, provided that he shows himself able to meet

---

[1] Baltimore papers of May 3rd, 1890. It is interesting to note that the judge quoted is an old republican leader, friendly to the advancement of the colored race.

the requirements imposed on all other classes of citizens, . . . the law, as it stands, forms only one part of a system that has passed away, and which no one wishes to bring back."[1] Yet the bill was lost—somewhere in the State-house. At the same time, three petitions were presented, for equal protection to all women by the passage of a bill which had been introduced two years before. One petition was of 115, another of 256, citizens of Baltimore, and the third from 214 members of the African Methodist Episcopal church in Harford county. The committee on judiciary soon reported against any change, but the old bill of two years standing was substituted for the report by a vote of forty-six to thirty-two, and the bill was later passed by fifty-six to twenty-four. In the senate, it was referred to the judiciary committee, and was seen no more.

The colored people could expect nothing of the democratic politician, but those of them who were most zealous for the repeal of the "black" laws were disappointed in the absence of vigorous assistance from the republican leaders and from many of the politicians of their own race. If the democrats were "copperheads" to them, the republican politicians were "weak-knees." Not that individuals would not vote for them, but the party managers, who felt pretty sure of a solid colored vote, were afraid to put in their platforms any questionable timber. It was at the request of several prominent colored men that the prohibition party alone—a party that had little to gain and little to lose—put in their platform in 1886 the desire to have the word "white" wiped out of the statute books, and to give justice and equality to all. As to the colored politicians, as a body, they had been striving after offices for many years, and advising those who wanted equality of rights to have patience. "Politicians," said a prominent colored lawyer, later, in a public address, "have betrayed the people and bartered away our birthright and lawful heritages.

---

[1] Baltimore *Sun*, Feb. 7, 1884.

We must pursue new methods—not special legislation, but the enforcement of the law as it is."

It was with such an idea, for the enforcement of the highest law of the land, and the need of assistance to injured members of their race—as in the case of the steamer *Sue*—that a number of leading colored men of Baltimore, notably Baptist clergymen, associated together in 1885, as the Mutual United Brotherhood of Liberty. The organization was simple; the purpose was "to use all legal means within our power to procure and maintain our rights as citizens of this our common country." The constitution opens with the words, that as it is a Scriptural truth that God has made of one blood all nations of men, and as it is equally true, according to the Declaration of American Independence, that all men are endowed with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, therefore it is the solemn duty of every man to seek to maintain these rights. The brotherhood soon held a public meeting, at which Frederick Douglass spoke, in order to rouse general interest; the membership was increased by not a large number but by a very desirable element, of various denominations; and it took a leading part in the movements which thereupon followed, for the elevation of the colored people of Maryland.

First of these steps was the opening of the bar, which colored men had for years been trying to accomplish in various ways, and which the legislature, as we saw, had refused or neglected to do. In October, 1877, a colored man, who had been admitted to the bar of Massachusetts by the supreme court of that State, and had since moved to Baltimore and been admitted to the United States' courts, but had applied in vain to practice in the city courts, applied to the court of appeals. He argued that the right to limit admission to the bar to whites had been rendered inoperative; but the court decided otherwise, holding the matter settled by decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, that the federal powers protected those privileges only which belonged to citi-

zens of the United States, as such, and that the right to practice law in a state court was not such a privilege. In 1884, some of the colored leaders who were soon to form the Brotherhood of Liberty, decided to make an effort to have the law tested again, in the case of another colored member of the Massachusetts bar then living in Maryland. The associates became responsible for any expenses necessary, the services of a lawyer were secured, and a petition for admission filed, in December, in the city of Baltimore supreme bench. The matter dragged along, the court evidently considering it as settled by the court of appeals' rulings in 1877, until the counsel for the petitioner secured a day for a hearing, on the claim that more recent decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States might raise a question. A few days before the hearing, the Baltimore *Sun* called attention to its editorials of the previous year, when the bill to open the bar was before the legislature, and added: "Sooner or later all restrictions on freedom of citizenship must disappear, and there is no reason why the legal profession should be the last to recognize the inevitable." A reporter of the *Sun* also interviewed a number of prominent citizens on the subject, including several of the judges of the supreme bench. The mayor, Mr. Latrobe, said that all restrictions on the freedom of citizenship should be removed; and several prominent lawyers, democrats, of Southern instincts, expressed themselves as having personally no objections, if the colored men proved their fitness. One lawyer said the matter had been discussed at a club, without any expressions of race prejudice. The judges who were seen agreed in the injustice of the law, one calling it "a relic of barbarism," but they seemed to feel hopeless of redress except from legislative action. Some members of the bar were opposed to any change, of course. The *American* advised an appeal to the legislature.[1]

---

[1] On the day before the hearing, the Baltimore *American* advised the colored people to appeal to the legislature. The next day, the colored paper, the *Director*, called attention to the strong utterances of the *Sun*, the

The hearing took place on Feb. 14, 1885, and a few weeks later the supreme bench gave their unanimous opinion that, in accordance with decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States since 1877, colored men must be admitted to practice law despite the word "white" in the State code. The law in the States, the Supreme Court had said in 1879, shall be the same for the black as for the white man; and, again, in 1883, the States cannot deny to any citizen "the right to pursue any peaceful avocation allowed to others." By the constitution of Maryland, also, said the city bench, judges must be selected from those who have been admitted to the bar. But the United States Supreme Court had decided that colored men cannot be excluded from the jury box on account of color, and this decision would apply equally to a law excluding them from the judicial office and participation in the selection of juries. So, as a statute must give way rather than a provision of the State constitution, when the provision alone is not repugnant to federal law, the act of assembly limiting members of the bar to whites is made void. As the result of this test case, thus carried through by a few men, in the face of much discouragement and at a cost of over $200, there are now five colored lawyers in Baltimore, young, intelligent, progressive men, bidding fair to be successful in their profession. They bear witness to the professional courtesy shown them by all decent lawyers.[1]

The State bar was not opened to colored men until 1888, when the colored lawyer who had first taken up the practice of law in Baltimore was admitted to the court of appeals.

---

democratic organ, and asked where their staunch republican friends were in this fight. On receiving from the editor of the *American* his article of the day before, the *Director* asked if he did not know that the assembly of 1884 had been appealed to in vain. The *Herald* came out, a few days after the hearing, and said: We knew that our opinion was well known, and that nothing that we could do would have any effect, in a matter which was not before the popular judgment, but a court of law.

[1] See Baltimore papers, Feb. 9–17, March 20, 1885.

The word "white" had then been dropped from the law, in the new code. There is, at least, one colored lawyer in the counties. It is interesting to note a case which came up in Baltimore county court, in November, 1889, in which a young colored man was acquitted of a charge of assault on a white girl—and against him, when he was arrested, months before, there had been some popular feeling—by a jury of white men, being defended by two young colored lawyers, recent graduates of the University of Maryland. It was the first time a colored lawyer had been heard in the court-house.[1]

The first two colored men to practice here were graduates of Howard University; but the law school of the University of Maryland had soon, with the opening of the bar, admitted colored applicants, and the two young men just mentioned were the first graduates, in the Spring of 1889. There was some little talk of dissatisfaction, nothing more, among some of the white students, and there were some among the faculty who disliked the change. One of the colored students said, in a paper he was then editing: "We are as cordially received and as finely treated" here as when we were in a Northern college. And it is pleasant to note that the graduating students themselves, by the good judgment and tact of the two colored ones, and the kindly feeling of the majority of the white ones, in return, prevented any color discrimination in seating the guests at the graduation exercises. One of the colored students stood very high in the class, and is now—as one of his white classmates is doing also—assisting a judge of the city bench, an instructor in the law school, in the preparation of some work on equity jurisprudence. There are at present two colored students at the law school.

The next movement of the Brotherhood of Liberty, the bar having been opened, was against the retention of the word "white" in the bastardy law. In 1886, a bill to strike out the discrimination had been introduced in the senate at

---

[1]An alibi was maintained by the counsel for the prisoner.

Annapolis, had been reported favorably by the judiciary committee, and had then shared the fate of similar bills and disappeared. Thereupon, the counsel of the Brotherhood of Liberty carried a test case before the Baltimore city bench, which decided that the law was constitutional, and dismissed the parties, who were colored. Soon after, a white man came before the criminal court, under the law, on a charge brought by a white woman; but the case was dismissed on the ground that the law was unconstitutional as not applying alike to all citizens. Finally, in the Spring of 1887, a case under the law was brought from the circuit court of Washington county to the court of appeals, on the same ground, that the bastardy law was made void by the fourteenth amendment to the constitution. The court said there was need of a decision in such a question, which had been decided in different ways, and had been a matter of popular comment and discussion. Stating that individual opinions as to the wisdom of the law should not be given from the bench, the court showed that while the law applied only to white women, there was no discrimination, by color or otherwise, of the fathers of bastards; and declared that there was no discrimination against colored women by their omission from the law. Any money paid the white mother was simply for the care of the child, to protect the county often—the law aiming at no redress for personal wrong done the mother, who was a consenting party to wrong doing. The state of living together unmarried was not made a crime by it. This decision was given from the chief judge and three associates—a fourth associate judge, the only republican on the bench, giving the short dissenting opinion that, if the fourteenth amendment meant anything, it meant that there should not be in any State one law applying to the white race and another applying to the black, especially in criminal law.[1] After the failure of this appeal, arangements were made to carry the case to the Supreme

---

[1] 67 Md., 364.

Court, and a subscription was opened in the leading colored paper in Baltimore, to defray the expenses. Seventy-five dollars were needed, and a half of this was soon given, mostly in sums of a dollar. But several months went by before the paper could announce that some sixty dollars had been pledged, and all subscribers were urged to pay up, that the case might be begun. The leaders in the movement decided, then, to await the action of the assembly soon to meet. In March, 1888, another bill to change the law, though reported favorably by the judiciary committee, failed in the house of delegates, by a large majority. In April, a similar bill passed the senate by a vote of seventeen to one, but was defeated in the house by a large majority. It is interesting to note, to show that the agitation was not confined to a few leaders in Baltimore, that two petitions were sent the assembly, one from seventy-six colored citizens of Frederick county, and the other from 242 colored citizens of Allegany. Disappointed again by the legislature, the counsel of the brotherhood renewed the call for subscriptions to pay for an appeal, stating that only $36.85 had been actually received. Meantime, in 1887, an association of colored women had been formed, largely by the influence of a few prominent members of the African Methodist Episcopal church, to rouse a general interest for the repeal of the old law. It grew somewhat out of a protective union that had been formed two years before, for work among colored women in Baltimore; it now increased to two hundred or more members, and by 1888, had raised a small fund for the expected expenses in testing the bastardy law. It was at this time, when the house of delegates, for partisan or other reasons, had refused to change the law, that the new code of general public laws for the State was quietly accepted by the assembly. That code did not contain the word "white" in the jury law, the bastardy law, or the law regulating admission to the bar. The practical working of the change may be seen, to a certain extent at least, in a recent case in a county near Baltimore, where a colored man, in jail

for inability to pay the necessary sum for the support of his child, married the woman, thus legitimizing the child, and was set free by the court with an admonition that he would be expected to care for his family and behave himself. The colored people feel that a stigma, which had its origin in the old slave days, has been lifted from them.

In the abolition of these "black laws," one chief object of those colored leaders most zealous for the progress of their people, had been accomplished; but other work was before them. We have noticed already the lynching of Cooper, taken by a mob from Baltimore county jail, on the eve of an appeal in his case to the Supreme Court, in order to test the jury law. Within a decade up to 1887, some eight colored men had been lynched in Maryland, nearly all, like Cooper, for felonious assault on white women. One, however, had been a house-breaker, of bad repute; and in one case, in 1885, a brutal negro of criminal character and record, who had atrociously assaulted a little colored girl, was taken out of jail and hanged by an organized mob of colored men. The colored people of the neighborhood, if reports be true, pretty generally said—good riddance. But the colored leaders, as a rule, have felt that lynch law was largely the result of race prejudice, in that it was applied practically by whites to blacks alone. In the Fall of 1887, a colored man was in the jail at Frederick city, in the midst of a large community, waiting trial on the charge of felonious assault on a white woman in the city. The identity of the man as the guilty party had yet to be positively proven in court. There was intimation of violence abroad, to the extent that the state's-attorney advised the sheriff to be on his guard. But no steps were taken for special protection, and the man was taken from the jail and hung. There was considerable excitement among the colored residents for some days; especially as, two years before, a colored youth had been shot, in pursuit for some offense, by a city policeman, unpopular among the blacks. The policeman had then been tried and acquitted, but the colored people had been so aroused as to

form a temporary organization for self-protection by legal means. Now there was more excitement, and some threats were made against the policeman mentioned. All this soon quieted down. But the Brotherhood of Liberty in Baltimore advertised a reward of $500 for the arrest and conviction of any one of the lynchers. None were discovered; but since then the only person lynched in Maryland, it is believed, has been a white man, of bad record and waiting trial for barn burning, in jail, in Prince George's county. He was taken from the jail and hung to a bridge near by, by white men. No action in the matter has been taken by the authorities until the recent charge of the circuit judge to the grand jury, to try to have the lawlessness properly punished.

Meantime, for many years, the thinking and progressive minority of the colored people of Baltimore city had been asking for better school facilities. Previous to 1865, the public schools—the academies excepted—depended almost entirely on the local authorities of city or county. Then an educational revolution took place, the public schools being put under a State system, and a course of rudimentary instruction offered every white child. A State normal school was provided for; and an annual tax of fifteen cents on every hundred dollars in the State was levied, to be divided between the counties, and the city of Baltimore, in proportion to their populations between the ages of five and twenty. This tax was in addition to the local school tax, by which the schools had previously been mostly supported. The few free colored persons of means, in the old days of slavery, had, with a few exceptions by local legislation, been taxed along with their white neighbors for the county levy, although no school facilities were given them. The law of 1865 provided that this part of the school taxes paid by colored men should be specially used for founding schools for the colored people; the schools to be under the care of the commissioners, and to be frequently visited. It is interesting to note that in the constitutional convention of the preceding year, the convention which carried

through the abolition of slavery, the committee on education refrained from offering any provision for the education of the blacks, believing that as yet the people of the State—and they referred largely to the Union party which alone could vote—were not ready for it. But a motion to limit the schools to be established entirely to whites was defeated by a vote of forty-three to eighteen.

The political revolution in the State in 1867 was followed by another school law, but the principles of the system already in operation were kept. That system, wrote the principal of the normal school in 1869, began under circumstances which seemed to render its success impossible; but despite "all the difficulties necessarily attendant on the attempt to introduce the most advanced educational ideas among a community not prepared for so radical a change," despite "the odium attaching to the law (*i. e.* of 1865) on account of its origin," and the fact that the first administrators of it were not in political sympathy with the great body of the people, the intrinsic value of the law itself and the success of the work begun under it, have made the system a part of the settled policy of the State. The law of 1868, under the new constitution, ordered a tax of ten cents on the hundred dollars for the State school tax, and continued the former provision, that the local school taxes paid by colored men be used for colored schools. Down to 1872, this petty sum was all that the colored schools could expect, except donations from individuals. The annual reports of the school commissioners for the various counties, for 1868, refer to the colored people only three times; in one case, on the Eastern Shore, to note that the small taxes due colored schools had been given to an institution for colored children, largely aided from Baltimore, and that the colored people were helping themselves, in addition to the tax; in another, from a Western county, to call attention to the need of education for the blacks, with the exhortation to "give him education or take back that (*i. e.* liberty) which has been thrust upon him;" in the third case, from a Southern county, to explain the recent

decrease in the donations for schools (*i. e.* for whites, as usual) as due largely to the losses from a large portion of the property of the county "having been taken by the government as a sort of patent medicine, 'to save the life of the nation,' without being paid for." It is not surprising to learn that by some of these local authorities, the founding of the colored schools, even from the school taxes paid by colored men, was discouraged. In 1872, the State ordered that there should be at least one school for colored children, if the average attendance was fifteen, in each election district, to be kept open for full terms; and appropriated the sum of $50,000 yearly for the support of the colored schools, in addition to the local colored tax, to be divided according to the school population. The white schools continued to receive all the regular State school tax. In 1878, the sum of $100,000 was appropriated to colored schools, to be taken from the State school tax, at the expense of the white schools. The white schools, which had received $412,088 in 1868, now, ten years later, received $377,875. So the law remained until 1888, when the rate of the school tax was raised one half-cent, and the appropriation for colored schools raised from $100,000 to $125,000, or as much of this increase as the tax might give over the sum of $500,000.

The result has been that, in the past year, the white schools received from the State tax $405,001, and the colored schools $118,049. The local school taxes have grown, in the past decade, from $788,828, to $1,012,600. All but a small fraction of this sum goes to white schools, but Baltimore city and several counties have already set an example by having only one local school fund and drawing from that according to need for both colored and white. This plan was urged upon all the counties by Governor Lloyd in a recent message. The amount now received by the colored schools in some of the lower counties, where the black population is largest, is singularly small, nearly all expenses being paid from the State tax. In seventeen counties together, last year, less than $10,000 was received by colored schools from the local authorities. The

State school tax of last year was divided very nearly in the proportion of the colored and white populations; but the advantage is now on the side of the colored people, for the number of whites who are on the school rolls is larger than that of the blacks proportionately; while the attendance of the blacks enrolled is proportionately less than the whites, and according to official reports, is decreasing in the counties rather than increasing. The last twenty years have seen a great advance in the colored schools throughout the State. What is needed now is, on the part of the white people and notably the local authorities, an increasing willingness to give the colored people all reasonable facilities, in proper school buildings, in full terms of instruction, and in encouragement to educate themselves; and, on the part of the colored people, a greater appreciation of the facilities they already have.

In Baltimore, even before the war, there were no less than six private schools taught by colored persons, with from fifty to a hundred pupils each, many of them being adults. Several of these schools continued during the war. At the same time some members of the Union party, aided by money and workers from the North, interested themselves in founding schools for the freedmen. From this movement grew up the Baltimore normal school for colored teachers, which has done a valuable work, and has for some years been given $2,000 from the State appropriations. Some of the colored schools still meet in buildings erected by the Freedmen's Bureau. A number of public schools were begun in Baltimore, and a considerable sum appropriated by the city government of that day. Statistics, as given in the papers, showed that in 1867 there were 2,800 colored pupils registered in Baltimore, and over twice as many in the counties; and that the colored people of the State had contributed over $23,000 in the year preceding, while the city council had appropriated $20,000, for colored schools. When the political revolution came, there chanced to be no balance for salaries in Baltimore for the teachers of the colored schools. Some, if not all, of the colored ones kept on

teaching, however; one or two, who had some means, giving their services. Meetings were held by the colored people, and money contributed towards the school expenses. Finally, in 1868, the city paid the arrears, amounting to several thousand dollars, and the colored schools were continued, but with white teachers entirely. There were then thirteen colored schools, under twenty-nine teachers, with 1,312 scholars enrolled, and an average attendance of 1,012. The total cost of these schools for that year had been a little over $22,000. At that time, scholars who could afford it, were expected to pay a small sum, somewhat over a dollar a month, for the use of books, and it is interesting to note that of the 1,312 colored scholars, 944 paid over $2,800, thus reducing the cost of the schools by this sum. The 107 white schools had then 21,465 scholars, under 526 teachers. Of these scholars, 11,353 were pay, and 10,112 free. The total cost of the white schools was about $390,000. Of this sum, over $120,000 came through the State levy. Of the 11,400 odd scholars in the white primary schools, those nearest in grade to the colored, a good many more than half paid nothing. The school committee then estimated that primary schools were needed for about 3,000 colored children, and that these could be maintained, on the same grade as the white primaries, for some $55,000 yearly. Only $15,000 was appropriated by the city council, to be added to the local school tax paid by colored men. The year before, the superintendent of schools had stated that there were in the city over 8,000 colored youth between the ages of ten and nineteen. The republican leaders were in favor of better schools for the blacks, of course; while the conservative organ, the *Sun*, said: "Without taking into account any higher considerations, it is evident we cannot afford to let the colored people among us go uneducated. There is a duty to them as well as ourselves in the matter."

But for nearly twenty years there was little change to be noted in the colored school system in Baltimore. By 1879, the year of the first payment for colored schools from the

State school tax, one new school had been added, the number of teachers had grown from twenty-nine to eighty-nine, the number of pupils on the rolls was 4,398. The total expense of the colored schools was nearly $60,000, of which over $18,000 came through the State tax. The sum expended for white schools was over $540,000, of which some $121,000 came through the State tax. The total of white pupils in all schools was about 32,000; in the primaries, nearly 16,000. Of these primary schools, 3,863 were pay, and 11,905 were free; while of the colored scholars, now, only seventy-one paid. The average attendance of the colored scholars was from five to six per cent. below that of the white primary schools. Five years later, still, while the number of schools remained the same, the teachers had increased to 104, and the scholars to nearly 6,000; and the average attendance was almost as good as that of the white primaries. The white scholars had increased in greater proportion; although between 1870 and 1880 the colored population of Baltimore had grown more than the white, and was not far from one fifth of it.[1] The proportion of the State school tax for colored schools, based on a census of the whole population, was about one-sixth and a half; that of the total expenditure for colored schools was less than one-eighth—the white scholars paying for use of books some $47,000, the colored, less than $100. The total amount used yearly for current school expenses in the city had increased, in the five years, some $50,000. All the teachers were white, though colored teachers had been used in the counties from the beginning of the public school system, and had steadily increased in numbers until white teachers in the county colored schools were few. Several colored persons had already passed the school-board examination in Baltimore, but to no result. For years the colored schools were all primaries, but one had been made of higher grade, called a grammar or

---

[1] According to estimates, the white population has increased in greater proportion, recently; owing largely to the extension of the city.

colored high school. The building used for it, however, was in very bad condition, and there was evident need of new buildings for some of the other schools.

For years, a few colored leaders had been asking for better schools and for some colored teachers. Thus, for instance, a series of meetings was held in several of the colored churches in 1879. "The white teachers," said one speaker, "do not throw their hearts into the work. Go to Cumberland, Hagerstown, &c., and you will see justice done!" Another, a very well-informed man, of prominence, compared Baltimore to Charleston, S. C., St. Louis and Washington, and told how, in the latter city, five of the nineteen members of the school-board were colored men, how a colored man was principal of the colored schools, how there were ninety-two colored teachers, and how the average attendance of the colored children had been raised high. A few months later, in 1880, the irrepressible question, as the *American* called it, was raised again at a large meeting; resolutions were passed, giving thanks to the *American* and to the large number of liberal citizens who had befriended the cause; and a petition, with several hundred names, was prepared for the city council. In the Summer following, the chairman of the committee appointed, a colored clergyman, stated he had seen every member of the school-board, and that promises were given that, as soon as suitable buildings were found, colored schools should be opened, and colored teachers should have charge of them. And then more meetings were held. At one of these, a colored clergyman, principal of a colored school in Jacksonville, Florida, said that nearly all Southern cities were ahead of Baltimore in colored schools. "You must be up and doing, not merely talking," he added. At that time there were several colored candidates for teachers' positions, high on the school-board lists. After some postponements, the matter came before the school-board, which decided by five to three that it was inexpedient, from lack of means, to open the two new colored schools proposed six months before. But at the next meeting,

it was voted that the schools should be opened in rented buildings, in January, 1881. The temper of the board was said to be for trying the schools, and its faith was pledged to them.[1]

By 1885, however, nothing had been gained by the colored people, and the leaders felt as discouraged of getting any help from the city hall—wherever the check lay, in school committee or in city council, the result was the same—as they had of help from the State assembly in abolishing the black laws. The Brotherhood of Liberty, having already had the bar opened to colored men, then determined to try, through the courts, to have some colored teachers appointed, from those waiting on the school-board list, to provide in some way a proper high school for the more advanced colored pupils, and to have the colored grammar school removed from the building it then occupied, which was deemed unsafe for occupancy. Measures to this end were being prepared, when it was thought that the objects desired might be obtained by further application to the city authorities.

While the lead for better schools was taken, now, by the Brotherhood of Liberty, there was quite a movement among the colored people at large. It was increased by the intermarriage question which arose, at the same time, from the trial at Hagerstown. A Maryland Educational Union was formed, largely under the lead of one of the younger clergymen, and public meetings were held. The colored women were called upon to form auxiliary unions. Sums of money were pledged —in one case several hundreds of dollars—by colored men, should it be necessary to try to force the city authorities. It was stated that, by the school board reports, the colored schools would not hold 6,000, while the colored school population must be 14,000.

It is probable that a better means of moving the city authorities to act than all these meetings—in some of which politics were kept out with difficulty—was quietly going on

---

[1] See *American* for Sept., 1879. Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 1880.

all this time, in attempts by several colored individuals to educate the children about them, where there were no schools. In 1885, a day school was opened in the little Patterson Avenue Baptist church, with some twenty scholars. The church gave room and fuel, the scholars paid ten cents a week each. The number soon grew to over 200. Beside this school, there were several private schools, at the houses of the teachers, in Northwest Baltimore; one kindergarten was soon established, encouraged by friendly whites; and night schools were held at the Biblical Centenary Institute, and at one of the Baptist churches. In these and other schools where teachers and pupils were of the same race, better work was done, the colored leaders claimed; as more sympathy and mutual interest was shown, and the work of the teachers went beyond the school-room into the homes and the churches.

Officers of the Brotherhood of Liberty, and those working with them, then asked the city for new schools, and interested some of the city government in their requests. So, early in 1887, the city appropriated $14,000 for land and $24,000 for a building, for a new high and grammar school. Curiously, a part of the ceiling of the old grammar school building fell during school hours, but a few weeks later; and this stimulated the colored leaders in their exertions. The council also passed an appropriation for a new colored school in Northwest Baltimore, but the mayor vetoed it, together with other things, fearing too much taxation. An ordinance was also proposed by one of the republican councilmen, that colored teachers should thereafter be appointed to all vacancies arising in colored schools; but the committee on education would not consider it, and the council rejected it. The vote in the second branch of the council was a party one, the republicans present being in favor of it, the democrats opposed; in the first branch, which was wholly democratic, it failed to appear. The next year, 1888, $7,000 for land and $18,000 for a building were appropriated for a new school in Northwest Baltimore; and a few weeks later was passed the ordinance that in all colored

schools thereafter established, colored teachers should be appointed, after passing the same examinations as are set for white candidates. The salaries were to be the same also. The objection to the ordinance of the previous year was now avoided by providing that in no case should white and colored teachers be employed in the same school.[1] Since then, $31,000 more have been appropriated for a new primary school. At the same time, a regular high school course with regular certificates of graduation, was secured for advanced colored scholars; and now those who finish the course with the same degree of proficiency as is required in the white female high schools, are eligible for the position of teacher, in certain school work, for ten years after graduation, like the white high school graduates.[2]

The new school in Northwest Baltimore is already in successful operation, crowded with pupils under colored teachers, while the nearest old primary school, which sent forth many to it, was at once filled up. The private schools continue, the one in the Patterson Avenue Baptist church, which was really the nucleus of the new school, having still some fifty paying pupils. There are still two small night schools under the patronage of the Centenary Biblical Institute. One, for instance, meets every Monday night, under a young colored teacher, and has grown to have twenty-two scholars, mostly adults living in the neighborhood of the Institute in West Baltimore, who pay each one dollar a term for tuition. A second kindergarten is now in its third year, having grown to thirty-five, all that the young colored teacher can accommodate in her house. The children pay forty cents each a month. At the time of the agitation for better schools, a few leading pastors in the African Methodist church tried to raise the means to establish a college for the higher education of colored youth of Wash-

---

[1] Ordinance of May 3, 1888.

[2] The per cent. required at the examination at graduation, in order to secure a certificate to teach, is 85 for males and females both, while the per cent. in the white male high school is only 80.

ington and Baltimore, but there was no hearty response. Meantime, the old Baltimore colored normal school was continuing its good work, dating from the Freedmen's Bureau days, but now for years receiving assistance from the State. The Biblical Centenary Institute, and its branch in Queen Anne's county, maintained by the neighboring Methodist Episcopal conferences, has been training numbers of young colored men and women. Much good work has also been done in connection with one of the colored Episcopal churches, under white clergymen. The colored girls' home at Melvale, and the colored house of refuge at Cheltenham, are educating in mind and body some of those who need help the most. These two institutions receive State aid, but had their origin rather in private philanthropy than in public policy. When the Prisoners' Aid Society asked for the house of refuge, the legislature finally agreed to give a goodly sum for the foundation, if an equal sum could be raised by individuals. This was done, probably to the surprise of some of the legislators.[1]

The new colored high school is in a good central location. The graduation exercises of the first class to complete the regular high-school course, and thus to be eligible as teachers in Baltimore without further examination, were held at Ford's Opera House in June last. The democratic mayor, a republican congressman from Baltimore, several members of the city council and of the school board were present, amid a gathering of representative colored people. Congratulatory addresses were made by the mayor, the president of the school board and the principal of the school, and the address to the graduates was given by one of the prominent colored clergymen who had been a leader in the movement for the better

---

[1] The writer does not attempt to give more than mention of such excellent institutions, which sprang from the interest of white individuals, and whose maintenance is little due to the colored people. Some of the old republicans of Baltimore should put on record the work done here in freedman days. Much of interest of work among the colored people here is told in Rev. C. B. Perry's *Twelve Years Among the Colored People.*

schools. Seven young women and two young men were graduated.

For several years, conventions of the colored teachers had been held, but the movement seemed to meet with little sympathy from some of the local authorities and with little zeal from many of the teachers themselves. Several of the colored clergymen of Baltimore then took hold of the movement, and a teachers' association has been formed, which meets twice a year, to listen to papers and addresses on school work. In one county, at least, on the Eastern Shore, a teachers' institute for colored teachers has been held during several weeks yearly, for some years; and in one of the Southern counties the school commissioners have recently appropriated something towards the traveling expenses of colored teachers to the association. More zeal and greater regularity in attendance is hoped for. The ordinary teachers' meetings of the State public school system, have been open to all the teachers, but there have been some marks of dissatisfaction on the part of white teachers at the meeting of colored and whites together, and at the prominence which the colored minority are inclined to take unto themselves on such occasions.

To show how the colored people, in so far as their part is concerned, owe everything that they have gained to a few leaders, it is only necessary to quote one of their young but most prominent men, from the columns of a colored weekly paper. Early in the Winter of 1887, before the new primary school and the trial of colored teachers had been finally made sure, he wrote: "The Maryland Educational Union is either dead or sleeping . . . our people are too prone to grow tired in well doing." . . The "colored people are too spasmodic;" last Spring they were all zeal, now there is absolute indifference. This is a great discouragement to the few who have the supreme welfare of the people at heart!

For what they have received, the colored leaders are thankful. Most of them realize that they will only injure their cause by seeking too much at once, without regard to public sentiment. The Brotherhood of Liberty continues,

and has just had published a book which a white lawyer of Baltimore, a democrat by politics, has been preparing for them for several years. It is entitled Justice and Jurisprudence, and its aim is, in short, to draw public opinion to the belief that the recent decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States have departed from the aim and spirit of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution; and that the example of a departure from the spirit of the law—a departure which public opinion now allows to exist against the interests of the colored people—may some day be followed to the disadvantage of other classes or interests.[1]

The history of the colored people of Maryland, in these twenty-five years, certainly teaches a few facts—facts which apply to some extent to all the Southern states.

First—all the circumstances under which freedom, citizenship and the franchise were given the blacks, tended to make the vast majority of the white people, among whom they were to live, especially averse to their progress as citizens. This dislike was naturally increased by the way in which the blacks as a people—who were to learn of citizenship by practice and not preparation—grasped the prizes offered them. The idea seemed to be abroad, that the exercise of right implied newborn faculties, and that custom which grows unseen by centuries can be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Yet the boyish enthusiasm of the blacks was as natural as the chagrin of the whites; the "day of jubilee" had come to them instead

---

[1] The writer of these notes does not wish to enter into any elaborate criticism of Justice and Jurisprudence. The book is interesting, and stimulating in places. But it does not sufficiently regard the exact state of public and party sentiment throughout the whole country, at the time of the adoption of the amendments and now—it often speaks of the amendments as if they had been free-will offerings of the people of the whole land. It is to be regretted also that the book is so voluminous. The same things might have been said in a book of half the size and selling for half the money—thus having more influence. Such use of quotations, of piece-meal extracts, may be questionable, too.

of the years of bondage. The inevitable result was that a reaction followed; the political career of the colored people was brief, and their way to legal equality was much hindered. Considering this, it is surprising that they have progressed as much as they have.

Secondly—there is among the colored people a growing class of men who see that the position their people are to take, among a larger people of more favored race, must come not by virtue of any laws but by their own virtue. The colored leaders are looking more for aid, from without, to the best men of the community without regard to party, and are trying to do away, within their people, with marks of childishness in political, religious and social life. "We have a reputation to build up," says one leader in Baltimore, "and full rights of citizenship to contend for, but far more urgently than these are needed reforms amongst ourselves, abuses to be restrained and frivolities to be suppressed." "I make the unqualified statement," said another, "that we as a race are not doing what we can for ourselves. . . . We cannot expect to pass up a royal highway, with glittering banners, to a goal of success. We must work, and persist and insist; we must organize, concentrate, agitate; we must economize, accumulate and have enterprise. . . . Such a course will make us stronger and command more respect for us." This class of leaders, the colored men of energy, thrift, public spirit and consistent zeal, is still very small. The great mass of the race do not think much and have little public spirit. "It requires no extraordinary observant eye," says a colored man who for thirty years has known all that has been going on among his people here, "to see that the great mass of the colored people of the country are drifting, drifting like a ship at sea without a rudder or captain. True, they have performed wonders since the emancipation, but that does not alter the fact." But the class of thinking colored men is growing, and there does not seem to be any reason why it should not grow. These leaders are mostly of much white blood; but they are not all so; and the majority of the colored people in this part of the country are fair in skin.

Thirdly—the number of white citizens who are willing to help the colored people to elevate themselves, especially in matters apart from politics, seems to be slowly growing. This may be much from motives of prudence, for the welfare of the community, rather than from philanthropy, but the result is the same.

Fourthly—if the colored man stays in the community, the exact place he is to fill in it must be determined by his white fellow citizens and himself. Forces from without may temporarily, but they cannot permanently, arrange such relations. As a Baltimore colored editor said when a Western colored editor called attention to the injustice done the colored people in Maryland: "Our judgment is that all these needed reforms in the various states and communities are to be wrought out by the people who reside in them. A healthy, just and equitable public sentiment must be created where it does not exist, by the advances of civilization and christianity, on the one hand, and the improvement of the condition of the colored people, on the other."

Fifthly—the colored people, as a people, have no more idea of leaving home, of migrating or being "deported," than the whites have. A few may go from the most crowded parts, some good missionary work may be done in Africa; but the mass of the colored men are here to stay.[1]

Sixthly—while any idea of social equality should be an idle fear—except to those who think that proximity in a public place creates necessarily some irksome social relations—all must frankly recognize that there is a strong feeling of caste on the part of the whites. Whether natural or artificial, or right or wrong, this feeling of caste exists. It cannot be hurried away by legislation. And so long as it exists, the

---

[1] The work of the Maryland Colonization Society practically ceased years ago. Despite the earnest efforts of its officers, there was always room for more emigrants in its vessels—when slavery or the fettered position of the free negro was the only sure prospect before the colored men.

colored people must reasonably consider it, or they will hinder their own advancement.[1]

Lastly—the most intelligent colored men know full well that if their people in the course of time prove themselves to be unworthy of citizenship and a permanent menace to the welfare of society, that the weaker must give way before the stronger. What they want is help to do their best. "The colored race is an infant amid the civilization of the age," writes a colored editor, a prominent colored lawyer of Baltimore—"We are coping with the ancient problem of the survival of the fittest. Any people who fail in a struggle for equality or preëminence are lacking needed qualities of mind, soul or body . . . a race with small mental powers and the consequent inferior character, can no more exist in free contact with a superior people, than can man live amid the raging Vesuvius."

The answer to that "problem" which some persons are talking of, and which some politicians are agitating, with no good result to the colored men or to their white neighbors, is not yet to be finally given. It does not seem possible, however, that the majority of good citizens of our land will allow the colored people to be condemned before the testimony is all in, at a fair, unbiased trial. It is probable that the process which we have seen quietly going on will continue to go on—that the better class of blacks will strive to help themselves and the race more and more, and the better class of whites will help them to do so. It is but twenty-five years since the end of slavery; but fifteen years since the "reconstruction" days. Another reconstruction should be going on, a reconstruction of mutual duties on the part of whites and blacks, throughout the land. It is hard for men to take the lesson of those lines so often said, yet always so new—

"New occasions teach new duties,
Time makes ancient good uncouth."

---

[1]We must expect conservatism, said a colored clergyman, but what we object to is prejudice—that is (to use his own words) "conservatism gone to seed!"

X.

THE STUDY OF HISTORY

IN

HOLLAND AND BELGIUM

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Brackett, Jeffrey Richardson

Notes on the progress of the colored people of Maryland since the war

Baltimore 1890

H.lit.p. 413 he-8,1/12
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11617275-6